

# OBSCURE STORIES



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## WITHIN FOUR YEARS

by Elva Lee, Class of 1893

from Project Gutenberg's *A Book of Bryn Mawr Stories*, by Various

In the dry, warm darkness of a May evening two girls lay on the grass near the tennis-courts north of Taylor. It was in the days when the present athletic field was only a roadway and a damp hollow where dog-tooth violets grew. Radnor and Merion loomed across the campus, their few lighted windows betraying how little the spirit of study possessed the hour. All the light and brilliancy of the college seemed concentrated in Denbigh dining-room, whence, through wide open windows, came the laughter and songs of the supper the juniors were giving the seniors.

There were sound and movement, too, in the obscurity under the windows. Now and then a hand and arm, or a head, rose from the shuffling, murmuring mass, and for a brief moment came into relief against the

bright oblong of the window, the hand in its withdrawal seeming always to carry with it something very like a cup or a plate, which was received below with shrieks or even some boldly distinct remarks.

One of the girls on the grass sat up suddenly, a stiffness of disapproval apparent in her attitude, even in the dim light from the library windows.

"That is all a disappointment to me." She supplemented her remark by a quick movement of one arm in the direction of Denbigh.

"Why?" The other girl turned, resting her head on her curved arm.

"To think that college girls can be so frivolous, so silly. It isn't at all what I expected before I came."

"You didn't suppose we talked in Greek all the time, did you, Lilian?"

"Of course I didn't think absurdities, Clara. But I did think college girls would be dignified and serious, and wouldn't act like a rabble of street boys. And that, I think is immoral." She rose with her back to Clara, as from Denbigh came, full and strong, reinforced by the voices of the freshmen under the windows, the chorus:

"Then here's to Bryn Mawr College,  
Drink her down, drink her down----"

Clara West clasped her arms around her knees and rested her cheek on them, murmuring in a sort of ecstasy, "I love it all."

Clara West was a quiet girl with odd impulses. One of these had been to ask Lilian Coles to sit with her for a while on the campus, as they happened to leave the library together. The oddity in this case was not that Clara was a sophomore and Lilian a freshman--class lines were then very loosely drawn. But Lilian was not the sort of girl every one would choose to sit on the grass with under the stars and listen to college songs. Lilian had accepted only because she was waiting for a reference book she wanted. It was this she now went in quest of, after bidding Clara a rather impatient good-night.

As she stopped by the half-open door of one of the first floor studies in Merion, a tall girl with smooth, red-brown hair parted in a straight white line, swung herself around from her desk and smiled.

"Oh, Miss Coles! You have come for the 'Augustan Poets'? I have just finished."

She wore a pretty organdie gown, for she was as scrupulous in maintaining the tradition of dressing for dinner as in every other

detail of her well-ordered existence. The study seemed rather bare, but there were a few rich rugs on the floor and on the flat couch, and large photographs of Greek sculptures on the walls. A tea table by the hearth was loaded with cups and saucers, cakes and sandwiches; and thin steam was beginning to come from a kettle hanging on an iron tripod.

"Won't you stay and have some tea?" Edith Dareham asked, as Lilian turned away with the book. "Some of the girls are coming in to talk over our play for the freshmen next fall."

"No, thank you, I don't drink tea, and--I don't believe in plays." With this bomb-like deliverance Lilian disappeared. Edith looked bewildered and rather pained.

"The people evidently don't want your 'panis et circenses,'" mocked a voice close at hand, and a pretty head thrust itself beyond one of the bedroom portières.

"Oh, Blanche dear, are you there? Won't you come out and help me make the tea?"

Lilian hurried out of Merion, meeting groups of freshmen and sophomores. A few of them nodded indifferently to her, but the majority seemed not to heed her. As she crunched over the gravel toward Radnor, where more lights were appearing, she had a sharp feeling of discomfort, unrelieved by any sense of heroism. She was well constituted for martyrdom, but just now the performance of duty seemed a very ungracious task.

Lilian was a victim of a world-old opposition, taking form in her in a conflict between a habit of thought imposed by training, and certain essential, though still latent, qualities of her nature. She was in a stage of intense admiration for Edith Dareham, unconsciously influenced by much in Edith that appealed to the undeveloped side of her character, though attributing her admiration wholly to the obvious traits revealed in Edith's fine conscientious work. Yet she felt an antagonism toward the fact that Edith gave encouragement, or at least tolerance, to certain features of college life that seemed very reprehensible to Lilian, according to the peculiar tenets of the religion in which she had been trained.

Her father was a member of a small religious sect, most numerous in the West, whose creed would seem, to the uninitiated, to be wholly negative, in its exclusion of all that makes for the brightness of life. The sect, though small, was vigorous in proselytism, and Lilian's father had been sent out as a missionary, first to Germany, then to Switzerland. Here had been for Lilian a vast increase in the chances for education; and with a natural aptitude and a child's facility she acquired a good knowledge of French and German. The leaders of this sect had established a small so-called college--really a school for the study of the Bible,

with their doctrinal interpretations--because, in the anticipation of an imminent ending of the world, they deemed time too short to be spent on any other line of study.

At about the time of Lilian's return to America, the school had been placed in charge of a man of good academic training, but of a difficult temper that had driven him from place to place till he had accepted this position as almost a last resort. When Lilian was placed in the school he quickly discovered the possibilities of her mind, and for three years gave her a rigorous training. He then advised her father to send her to college. Mr. Coles was not blind to some of the advantages shrewdly presented by the little instructor. He laid the matter before a committee of elders of the society, and consent was finally given. Before her departure, Lilian was called into the presence of the elders, and her opportunities for witnessing to the "light" in a new field, her duty of non-compliance, were solemnly, almost threateningly impressed upon her. The college was chosen by the instructor. The question of money presented difficulties at first, but was finally arranged, and Lilian went on for the examinations with a confidence born of her teacher's encouragement, and justified by her success.

To-night, as she went through Radnor, she could hear laughter, singing, rustling and skurrying,--all the relaxations of a Friday night, with festivity in progress. There was something almost greedy in the haste with which she lighted her lamp, closed her door, and drew down the window shade. Her unworded thought was that others might so waste their time if they chose; she could not afford to. Something of Lilian's reaction to her present environment might have been divined from her face. The forehead was of good shape, but too full for the thin, refined lower features. At her temples the veins were very distinct.

She studied until after the seniors and juniors returned from their supper. Her thoroughness in work was largely temperamental. She still looked upon her opportunities in college simply as means to greater efficiency in the missionary work she had been chosen to do--work that was in fact the propagation of certain peculiar theories. To her simple thinking, it was a sacrifice of herself to make the world better. Her anxiety over the approaching examinations was great.

The next morning she would gladly have gone to the library immediately after breakfast, but it was characteristic of her that she went instead for a two mile walk which she did not in the least enjoy. The Gulph road, behind the college, was a green cathedral aisle, starred with the white flowers of the dogwood. She did not know it. The rhododendrons were in brilliant bloom on the well-kept lawn of a country-place near the pond. She did not see them. But when she came in she was sure that she could not fail on Grimm's law.

Lilian's marks at the mid-year examinations had been good, but not high

enough to be striking, and as she left college as soon as the May examinations were finished and thus escaped the inevitable comparing of marks, no one knew how high were the grades she received. The excellence of her work, however, unperceived during her first year, save by very few, could not fail of notice as her sophomore year went on, and after the result of the February examination was known, aroused a dim uneasiness among some very devoted friends of Edith Dareham's. The general rough grading of the members of the class during the first year is apt to be accurate, and, with a little shifting, is accepted as permanent in the second year. Edith Dareham was now the recognized European Fellow of the class of '9--.

"You don't suppose there is any danger, do you?" was the query put to a group in a cozy Denbigh study one February afternoon before dinner. It was growing dark with a gathering storm, and the wind was whirling clouds of snow across the campus. In the room the gas was lighted, a coal fire was glowing in the grate, and two alcohol lamps were steadily burning. The querist was Katherine Leonard, "a junior by courtesy," she frankly qualified herself. Indeed a degree for her did seem at least problematical, not so much through neglect of hard work as through a perverse inclination to interest herself ardently in courses of reading quite foreign to her majors. She was absorbed in literature and philosophy while painfully struggling with mathematics and physics, and as these latter subjects scarcely permit a divided allegiance even to minds most gifted in that direction, the issue threatened to be disastrous for Katherine. But when urged to change her majors she simply shook her head. She needed the discipline, she said.

"Danger of what?" demanded Blanche Merrill, Edith Dareham's roommate, with an abrupt turn to Katherine.

"That Lilian Coles may take the fellowship from Edith."

"Of course not! How absurd!" replied Blanche superbly.

"Don't be too sure, Blanchette, dear," interposed a tall girl who was writing at a table under the gas. She was copying a lecture from her hostess's notebook into her own, and kept on while she was talking.

"Don't use that absurd name, Clothilde, any one would think I was a Trouville donkey. You might as well say 'Papillon.'"

"Thank you, I will. But \_revenons\_ --the fellowships are very uncertain certainties, and who can say what will happen with a girl who gets high credit in the gym."

"Then Edith may as well give up." Katherine's small form yielded to a spasm of laughter at the recollection of Edith's doing two hours a day in the gymnasium in order to avoid a condition.

"Yes," commented Blanche, "when Edith went to the gym before breakfast, Katherine would go and hold Thucydides up before her, so that Edith could put a last polish on her translation while she was doing chest weights and quarter circle."

"That isn't really true, you know," Katherine coolly joined in the laughter of the others. "That is, it's true only to the spirit, not to the fact. I would have done it if it had been necessary. But really it would be unjust to the college to give the fellowship to a girl who won't go to a tea."

"Is Miss Leonard here?" In response to a low rap some one had opened the door to Lilian Coles who stood a little bewildered at the contrast between the still unlighted hall and the bright room. Katherine freed herself from the group on the floor.

"Oh, you have brought that book. I wish you hadn't. I'll have to read it now. Come up, and I will give you the other. I haven't read it. I have been skating all the afternoon. Mabel, please hand me my skates."

"Won't you come in and have a cup of cocoa? It is so cold outside," Lilian was temptingly urged by the fair-haired girl who was nominally mistress of the study, though both she and her roommate were usually obliged to work in the library, so thoroughly did a reputation for hospitality characterize their room. Lilian wanted to go in, but without hesitation declined and started away with Katherine.

"Wait a moment," Katherine touched Lilian's arm and turned back to the open door. Two girls had begun to sing, in response to the guitar of a third,

"Drink to me only with thine eyes."

While Katherine listened to the song, Lilian's eyes rested curiously first on the sensitive face, then on the black sweater, short corduroy skirt and heavy boots that made up Katherine's skating costume.

"I am glad I am not so conscientious as Helen Arnold," Katherine said, at the close of the song. "When her aunt wanted to take her to Bayreuth last summer, she wouldn't go, because, not having an intellectual appreciation of music, she couldn't, forsooth, permit herself so much emotional enjoyment." Lilian looked puzzled yet stern. She could not but approve the action, though the motive seemed to her unnecessarily refined.

Katherine's rooms were on the second floor. When the two girls entered, the study was in the shadowy dimness of grey twilight cheered by a warm fire. Katherine lighted an old Venetian lantern and some red-shaded

candles, then drew the sash curtains which were of dark red silk with arabesques of fine gold lines. Above the mantel hung two carbon photographs of Fra Angelico angels in vellum frames; and at one end stood a bronze of the Flying Mercury, at the other a cast of the Olympian Hermes. On the walls were photographs of Matthew Arnold, Christina Rossetti, and Cardinal Newman; also some prints that Katherine fondly believed to be original Dürers. These objects had not the interpretative value for Lilian that they might have had for another; but the whole suggested luxury to her, and her eyes turned away disapprovingly to fall with a sort of startled horror on the recess left between two bookcases, where, against a dark background, hung an exquisite ivory crucifix. Lilian's attitude toward Catholicism was of the original Puritan inflexibility, strengthened by the exaggerated hatred of the class of people among whom she had lived. And she knew nothing of any concessions due to the opinions of others. The crucifix represented merely a sympathy, not a tendency on Katherine's part. But this fact, even if it had been known to Lilian, would have served none the less to intensify in her a feeling of radical difference between Katherine's governing ideals and her own.

When she entered Radnor on her return, two girls were coming slowly down the stairs, absorbed in confidential chat. They smiled at Lilian as she passed, but she knew that she had no share in the friendship expressed even by the touch of Clara's hand on Ethel's shoulder. She drew herself up sharply, remembering her longing to enter Florence Baker's bright, gay study.

Her way to her room took her past the single suites. The door of one was open, and within were trunks and signs of packing.

"Are you going away?" she paused to ask. Gertrude Elbridge, a pretty little freshman, came forward and drooped against the door.

"Yes, you know I have been ill since the examinations, and papa has sent for me."

"I am sorry." This was true, as Lilian had a mild fondness for the child, despite the fact that, through evenings of loud and prolonged hilarity, Gertrude and her friends had made life a burden to Lilian, and with direct consequence, to the members of the Executive Board of Self-Government. Lilian went on to her room, indignation possessing her. She knew why Gertrude was going away. Before each examination Gertrude had studied all night, her head bound in a wet towel. The towel really bothered her, but she knew that was what her brother did. She had kept awake on strong tea and coffee supplied by sympathizing friends. But evidently even these frantic efforts had not proved redemptive.

"Why," Lilian asked herself, "did not the stronger girls of the college bring a pressure of sentiment to bear against these follies, instead of

encouraging them by their own customs?" Was it not her duty to make some protest? An unavailing one it would doubtless be, but surely it is only a lukewarm reformer that considers results rather than principles.

She had returned to college in the fall with a strengthened antagonism to what her father called the worldliness of college life. His influence was still dominant with her. His vision was crude, and he denounced, with a solemnity appealing to the girl's native earnestness, all the joyous innocent froth of amusement that danced over the current of the real, serious life of the college.

In truth, Lilian had departed further from her father's beliefs than she realized. She had already gained an historical perspective and a certain habit of cool unbiased judgment that were forcing her to see in what ignorance and narrowness of mind those beliefs were conceived and accepted. At the same time the studies that had modified her views, tended to increase her sense of the preciousness of time, of the seriousness of life. Her loyalty to her father's teachings was stirred by an unanalyzed appreciation of the change in herself. And now, in the failure of Gertrude Elbridge she seemed to find a justification of the rigidly prohibitive lines her father would throw around all conduct. She could not see, yet, that the weak have their hard lessons to learn in the opportunities of the strong.

Unfortunately opportunity was not lacking Lilian Coles for that word of protest she felt bound to utter. She always attended the Sunday evening meetings, though little in sympathy with their spirit. The next Sunday she went early. Into the dimly lighted gymnasium came the girls, eyes sparkling and cheeks red from the clear cold air without. Nearly all were wrapped in shawls, but one girl wore a hat and coat and carried a bag. There was a big bunch of violets on the lapel of her coat, and she smiled rather consciously at some comments of the girls she joined. In the first row of chairs were some dignified seniors whom Lilian rather feared, and a junior who at once attracted and repelled her. She was, in spite of herself, fascinated by a cleverness that manifested itself in every department of the college, that would be a force in literature some day, so every one said; and at the same time she had a feeling that there was nothing the girl would not sacrifice to ambition.

At last Helen Arnold, who was to lead the meeting, came in accompanied by Edith Dareham. Helen was the girl who had refused to go to Bayreuth. She busied herself with great care in arranging the books and lamp on a little table. Her friends knew that she was embarrassed. She was a frail-looking girl, one who set a high value on things that were still unapprehended by Lilian, in their real nature.

She began with a short quotation and took, as a point of departure, the lines:

"That thread of the all-sustaining beauty  
Which runs through all and doth all unite."

With well-chosen words she modestly brought out her thought of the duty of each one to seek for this thread of beauty in all things. Then she spoke, with a little more insistence, of the beautiful in art and in nature, which, she believed, demanded for its true appreciation the highest cultivation not only of mind and age, but of soul as well.

After a short silence, Elizabeth Carrington, Helen's roommate, spoke, weaving Helen's thought into the larger one of that endeavor toward perfection sacredly enjoined upon us. With an impatience born of the incomprehension of her mood, Lilian had listened to Helen. She did not hear Elizabeth, who had scarcely finished speaking, when Lilian rose. The girls looked surprised; but after the consecrated formula--"It seems to me"--various expressions replaced the surprise. Some of the listeners looked coldly bored or contemptuous, a few were amused, but the majority sat ill at ease with pained faces. Lilian was arraigning them for so much time spent in idle conversation, and in "feasting"--she fiercely put it. She denounced them for their plays, their dancing. In her excitement she assumed the tone and phraseology of the denunciations she had been accustomed to hear from childhood and she went farther than she intended. She said their pursuit of knowledge was only for its vain shows. The nature of the silence into which her words fell should have warned her, but some confused association of ideas carried her on to a bitter allusion to Catholicism. She was recalled to herself by the indignant protest on Helen's face. Clothilde and one or two others present were Catholics. Lilian choked and stopped.

"Shall we not sing?" suggested Helen. Clothilde started the hymn. There was no more speaking. Lilian was the first to leave the meeting. She went out with unseeing eyes and hot cheeks, alone. There are times when even the kindest hearts are cold, and for the moment there could be nothing but alienation from one who had found tongue against the college spirit--for they felt that the attack was really against this vague, shadowy, stern, beloved thing of many hues and many forms--the spirit of the college.

Outside, the moon had risen in a clear star-powdered sky, and was silvering the crusted snow and the ice sheaths that rain and frost had left on every twig and branch of the trees. The sparkle and splendour of the night only smote Lilian as a part of that whole body of beauty which, it seemed to her excited thinking, had been presented that evening as of equal importance with goodness and morality.

There is little tea drinking on Sunday evening. Many girls are away. It is the time for writing home letters, or doing a little quiet reading. The rooms never seem so warm or the lights so bright as on other nights. The halls are still and everybody goes to bed early. But this night

there was a little more excitement as girls stopped to talk with indignation, amusement or indifference of Lilian's outburst. Katherine Leonard found several girls in Edith's room when she stopped, after an errand in Radnor. She sought each face questioningly, then dropped on the couch. "How awfully \_funny\_--how dreadful it was!"

"I can't understand the state of mind that would lead to that," said Alice Warburton. "Where has such narrow-minded egotism been fostered? Such injustice! What an arid life she must have known."

"I admire her!" said Elizabeth Carrington decisively. "I was near enough to her to-night to see how tightly she clung to the chair in front of her. Her knuckles were all white and shiny. It was real heroism. I doubt if any one of us will ever show as much."

"I should hope not!" Blanche commented energetically.

There was a girl lying on the couch who had been reading \_Diana of the Crossways\_, all this time. She occasionally made notes on the margins. Now she looked up. "For my part, I prefer goodness to cleverness," was all she said. Then she went on reading again. The girls all laughed a good deal. Then there was silence, and some of them laughed again--a little. Some of them were very much of Lilian Coles' opinion in regard to this girl, who was the junior Lilian had noticed in the gymnasium.

"She has greatly relieved my mind, at any rate," said Katherine. "She can never hope for the fellowship now."

"You have no right to say that." Edith was a little sharp. She was somewhat troubled within herself. She liked the serene state of mind that her usual conduct of life granted her, and hated a mean feeling with an intensification of the disgust that any contact with uncleanness gave to her physical fastidiousness. In the dissatisfaction that she had occasionally felt of late, it had occurred to her that she might settle issues with herself by some plan involving sacrifice on her part. But injustice was no dearer to her than selfishness. She fell asleep that night with the healthy resolve not to be troubled by what she could not help.

Meanwhile Lilian Coles was lying on her bed, in the dark, with wide-open eyes. She was restless with a shamed sense that she had violated her finest instincts. She continually wondered how she \_could\_ have done such a thing. Then all the questionings that had been forming in her deeper consciousness for nearly two years, came forward, insisting on a hearing. Helen Arnold's talk that evening passed through her mind with a new meaning and force, but she was too much exhausted then to come to any conclusions. She finally fell asleep, hoping that every one would be too busy to remember her speech very long.

One Saturday morning in the spring Lilian started downstairs. It was late, she was tired and vexed at her slothfulness. She had gone to bed the night before so tired that one night's rest was wholly insufficient. As she reached the foot of the stairs a girl came out of the bathroom with a kettle of water. She nodded to Lilian, went on, then turned.

"Miss Coles, you are sure not to find anything hot for breakfast. Won't you come into my room? We are going to have breakfast there."

Lilian hesitated. Something, perhaps an animating suggestiveness in the spring air that was sweeping through the windows, perhaps the mere yielding of tired flesh to kindly human influences, moved her to accept.

Hester Grey's room looked over the fields and low hills. Two study tables had been put together and were covered with white embroidered cloths. A bowl of violets was on one table and a dish of strawberries on the other, while the more substantial provisions for the breakfast were on a side-table. This separation was due to an arbitrary distinction of Hester's, food taking precedence in her ideas according to its appeal to the eye.

There were two girls in the window-seat and another in a steamer-chair. This one sprang up and insisted on giving Lilian the chair, tucking the pillow behind her with an unceremonious friendliness very grateful to Lilian.

Then she began cutting bread, urging that some one else pass Lilian the olives.

"Do you think you will want more sugar in your cocoa?" Hester asked Lilian. "Of course she will," said one of the girls in the window, without looking up from her book. "You never make it sweet enough." Lilian thought this was very rude, but Hester didn't seem to notice it. She carried a cup to Lilian, who looked at her curiously. Lilian had always had a thought of scorn in her opinion of this girl, whose erratic work, spasmodic brilliancy and general idleness were known to the whole college. Lilian knew that she would sit for hours on the stone wall of the Harriton burying ground doing nothing, even if examinations began the next day. No one ever seemed to be able to foretell whether she would get High Credit or a condition in any examination. Lilian had seen her absorbed in Treasure Island the day before the English essays were due. Hester's essay on Keats was written in one night, so rumour said. It received the only High Credit. Lilian had read it, with something like astonishment at the feeling aroused in herself by the revelation of another girl's mind. She had come to have a feeling like reverence for this girl, realizing at last that some gifts of the spirit are not to be measured by so many hours of study, so many hours of exercise. And now this same girl was apparently concentrating her whole mind on the amount

of sugar to be added to each cup.

Then Lilian had to think a little about the other girls in the room. They had always seemed to her commonplace, doing but indifferent work. At least they had won no distinction. She knew that the five were close friends, that they couldn't have the fullest enjoyment with her in the room, yet they were unaffectedly genial and hospitable to her. While she, with a perversity which shocked her, did not care if they did enjoy themselves a little less on her account. She wanted what they were giving her.

It is a truism that some actions most important to ourselves or others often seem but pure whim. Hester could have given no reason--in fact, it was not her habit to await reasons--for asking Lilian Coles to take a walk with her that morning. And Lilian, to whom even tying her shoe was often occasion for a mental inquisition, did not care to explain to herself why she accepted the invitation with eagerness. She had intended to spend the morning in making a tabulation and synopsis of some second year English reading. But the pain of that unforgettable Sunday evening had wrought in Lilian a distrust of her own valuations, and she went with Hester willingly.

The morning freshness was still in the air. Hester took Lilian through the woods where the starting leaves wreathed the grey tree-trunks and slim branches like trails of green smoke; to a wide bed of spring beauties; past the pond fringed with willows; across the fields to a stream that flung itself over the rocks with a sparkling abandon to the joy of spring. Lilian saw all these things; and she saw, too, the contrast between the rich black of new ploughed fields and the vivid green of winter wheat. She heard a bluebird singing above them. They went on to an old ruined mill, shadowed by tall dark pines whose roots were washed by a wide, shallow creek. Across the stream, there were woods. Here the girls sat under the pines and Hester read aloud from Undine. Gradually the wash and splash of the creek were transferred from Lilian's outward to her inward hearing and seemed to be singing to her of a spirit that was in the water. Suddenly she had a vision of the meaning of the old pagan ideals. She lay back on the grass and let her eyes look very far into the blue above the pines. It occurred to her that she would take some books home in vacation and read all the poems noted on the margins of her Horace. She understood now, she thought, something of the delight in that year's work which all the others in the class had expressed and which she had, in some way, missed.

They stopped to rest again on the stone wall of the old burying ground in the woods, and Hester read from Chaucer following her own liking wholly. Lilian went back to her room with a new sense of the beauty of nature, and of the dignity of free, wholesome joyous human life.

There was no time before luncheon for the intended tabulation of ballad

poetry, and in the afternoon she turned at once to the assigned reading in Wordsworth and Coleridge. Before coming to college Lilian had been allowed to read very little. Even her study of the Bible had been scarcely more than a search for texts and illustrations in support of the beliefs of her sect. All through this year the reading presented to her had been stimulating her imagination and perception. But partly from habit and partly from the fact of having detected a pleasure in the exercise of these faculties, she had continued to read mechanically and blindly. Now for the first time she permitted herself to read with something more than a desire to go over so many pages in a given time. As she finished the Hymn of Chamouni she caught her breath as one whose spirit has been lifted to an unknown height.

The twofold process of growth, of putting off the old and acquiring the new went on in Lilian with alternations of pain and pleasure, the latter increasingly predominating. When she entered college and for sometime after, she had her father's contempt for what he called "mere learning." But she was led to a very different way of thinking by a better understanding of what scholarship means--of its untiring zeal and care for truth, and of its outlook beyond the fact to the including law. She even came to accept an opinion that, later on, she found thus expressed: "... our deeper curiosity. There is a sense in which it is all superfluous. Its immediate results seem but vanity. One could surely live without them; yet for the future, and for the spiritual life of mankind, these results are destined to become of vast import." Lilian's nature was such, however, that she must always care chiefly for the immediate practical application of the idea.

During her junior year she did some elective work in sociology which completely revised her ideas of philanthropy. She saw how very inadequate were the measures that she had once thought essential to doing good in the world. Her hope of being a missionary was too much a part of herself to be given up easily, yet she knew that she could not represent her former views. She became greatly interested in college settlement work but she found no time to give to it, for she gave to tutoring all the time that she could spare from her regular work. The mental submission and the claim upon her future involved in the arrangement by which her expenses were paid had become impossible to her, and she wished to become self-supporting as soon as possible.

One Saturday morning she was sitting in the biological laboratory, carefully correcting her drawings of nitella, when Miss Hardy, a graduate student with whom she had done some work in sociology, came in and bent over her.

"Should you not like to go into town with me this evening to one of the social meetings of a working-girls' club which has been organized recently? I think you would be interested."

After a moment's thought Lilian decided to go. A girl whom she tutored every Saturday afternoon was ill and that time could be given to the usual Saturday evening work.

When they reached the Broad Street Station, Lilian was surprised to find Helen Arnold, who had been spending the afternoon in town, waiting for them. The clubhouse was in the lower part of the city. After their arrival there, Lilian spent an hour in eager inspection of the small library, the schedule of classes, and the furnishings of the rooms. Helen had disappeared. Lilian asked for her, and Miss Hardy explained, "She comes every Saturday if she can find any one to go to and from the station with her. She is teaching two or three girls who can have better positions as soon as they can write and spell better. This is the only time they have."

Then they went into a large, brightly-lighted room with a waxed floor. There was a piano at one end, and some one was beginning to play. The girls, most of them neatly and prettily dressed, were gathered near the piano, while a few young men, with very smooth hair and rather conspicuous ties, stood in stiff self-consciousness near the door.

"Young men of good character are invited in once a month," whispered Miss Hardy.

A half-grown girl, in heavy shoes, a crumpled red dress, with a soiled ribbon knotted around her neck, crossed the room and stood in front of Lilian. Her open scrutiny was beginning to be embarrassing when Helen came in. She touched the girl on the arm, and was soon leading the clumsy shoes lightly through a waltz. After two or three turns Helen sought some one else, and the girl returned to Lilian.

"Say, ain't she sweet?" she said, looking after Helen with eager eyes. "She teaches somethin' here, and I'm go'ne to learn it. And I want some white ties like she wears."

It was still early when they started for the station, but on the streets Lilian saw one or two things that made her glad to think of the many girls they had left in the simple pleasures of the carefully-guarded clubrooms.

A slight delay caused them to miss their train, and they had to spend half an hour in the waiting-room. Miss Hardy found some evening papers. Helen declined the one offered her, and drew a book from her shopping-bag.

"What reading is this, Helen?" Miss Hardy laughingly questioned. Helen blushed a little. "It is really only the third." On the train the book happened to lie for a moment in Lilian's lap. She noted the title. It was Marius, the Epicurean, and at her earliest opportunity she

procured the book and read it.

She read it with intense interest. Here were a care for life--for its pleasures--and a consecration of time that found no necessary detail too small for perfection. The charm of the book was upon her--its flawless form, its sanity, its strenuousness. There was something of the old defiance in her attitude toward this epicureanism, though the character of it was so exalted and pure. But at the close, when Marius simply puts himself aside and accepts death that his dear friend may live--happy in a love denied Marius--she put the book down very softly. By the profound stirring of her sympathies she felt how absolute was her acceptance of the whole character--as consistent with itself in sacrifice as in æsthetic enjoyment.

The constantly increasing deference given Lilian because of the quality of her work contributed much to her contentment. The freer play of her intelligence was making itself felt. By the beginning of their senior year Lilian Coles and Edith Dareham were undoubted rivals for the European Fellowship. But the real excitement over the fellowship was not apparent until after the mid-year examinations. Then the strain began to be wearing on the two girls and their friends.

"I wish the Faculty would come to a decision," said Katherine Leonard one evening in Clothilde Barry's room. She was on the window-seat between a big palm and a pile of notebooks. "If they don't very soon, I'll not get a degree in June. I love this place but I don't want to stay here all my life. It would be hard to fix my affections on another class. But I can't study till I know."

"I think that possibility would stimulate them, if they only knew--" began Blanche.

Just then the door was flung open and Alice Warburton came in impetuously--her usual manner, but some dramatic quality in this present haste must have made itself apparent, for the other girls assailed her breathless silence with questions. What she finally said was: "There is a Faculty meeting in Taylor." After a moment of comprehending silence, Blanche went out quickly. Katherine followed her.

"Blanche, if you find out before the doors are locked, won't you come and tell me?"

"I don't know how it will be." Blanche looked anxious and wouldn't stop. Katherine went back to Clothilde's room, and after she had tipped over the palm and broken the jardinière was advised by Clothilde to go home and go to bed. In her own room she took a physics laboratory book and made a feeble attempt to put order into its chaos, but only succeeded in dropping ink over two important calculations. Then she took down a volume of Mazzini's writings in which she had lately become much

interested. At the end of half an hour she became aware that she had not turned a page. She left her room and went down to the parlour. All the lights were out, even in the rooms. Over in Taylor there was a dim light in a second floor window. It had no connection with the Faculty meeting, but she chose to consider that it had, and crouched, shivering, in the window until it went out. Then she went stiffly to bed and slept badly. The next morning Blanche came to her soon after breakfast. "Edith wants to see you."

"Oh, Blanche?" But Blanche was already backing out of the door. "I can't tell you anything. Edith hasn't told me anything." Every line of her face was non-committal.

Edith was sitting at her desk writing when Katherine entered. She looked over her shoulder and smiled, but she was very grave. "I have it, Katherine."

Katherine sat down on the window-seat, and bending over pressed her forehead down on Edith's shoulder. Edith turned about and lifted Katherine's face. She was crying--Katherine, in whom the repressions of stoicism had been the least fleeting of many moods. After a while Katherine said, "We were afraid at one time, Blanche and I--that you might do something--rash." It was not necessary for Edith to ask what she meant. She hesitated before speaking. "I have felt troubled. It isn't reasonable, but I haven't been able to get rid of an uncomfortable feeling about Lilian Coles. I could go to Europe without the fellowship, and I suppose she can't. But--I wanted it. I did try to think of some way of helping her when I heard last year that there was danger of her having to leave college. But even if I had had the money--that's a sort of thing it is almost impossible to do. It might have seemed a generous thing for me to let my work go a little, but I could not be sure that she wouldn't do better than even my best. And," Edith gripped the desk hard, "it would have seemed to me a simply wicked sentimentalism to do poor work deliberately for any reason whatever."

Katherine released the sleeve of Edith's gown that she had held crumpled in her hand. "I am so glad you felt just that way."

Blanche came in then to gather up her notebooks.

"How did you find it out, Blanche?" Katherine asked.

"Oh. I found the note under her door when I came down from Ethel's room last night"--Ethel was Blanche's sister--a freshman. "We had been sitting up watching. But Edith was sleeping like a baby. I lit a candle and roused her and gave her the note. I must say she was rather excited until she got the note open and read it." Blanche stopped. "Did she tell you then?" prompted Katherine.

"She hasn't told me yet. That honour was reserved for you. She lay down again and I kissed her and covered her up and told her to be a good fellow. Then she laughed and so did I, as silly as two loons. She went to sleep. I went upstairs and awakened Helen and Elizabeth. I did not tell them anything, but they understood, and we talked until two in the morning. Imagine Elizabeth and Helen sitting up till two!"

Katherine was popular enough in college, but that did not account for the way numerous groups, from seniors to mid-year freshmen, obstructed her going from Merion to her own room, and thence to Taylor. They asked her unimportant questions, and eyed her curiously. Her face was impassive. The chapel was unusually full. Edith's friends had gathered around her in her usual seat, well forward.

"But that doesn't mean anything," whispered a high freshman voice, "they'd be there just the same anyway."

Lilian's chief supporters were among the graduate students. Those from other colleges looked rather defiant. A few members of the Faculty came in and sat in the back seats. After the short exercises, the announcement was very quickly made. During the storm of applause that greeted Edith's name Lilian sat apparently unmoved. Her hands were very cold, but no one knew that. And no one would ever know how much she had wanted that fellowship. She had been having a very bad quarter of an hour since Clara West, who was back as a graduate student in Greek, managed to find out and let her know that the decision had been made. Three times before, Lilian had heard a similar announcement made, and each time she had thought that the applause would have been just as loud if the other possible girl had been named. Now she knew that there would not have been the same gladness on the faces or the same heartiness in the hand-clappings if she had been the one instead of Edith. She could have made more friends, she believed, but she had thought that she knew a better use for her time. A keen heart-longing was mingled with her disappointment.

A few weeks later the presence of the students in chapel was again specially requested, and more announcements were made, among them, that the Fellowship in History had been given to Lilian Coles.

"I am so glad!" repeated Clara West that evening, strolling with Lilian about the campus. That Lilian was strolling was not without its significance. It was a misty evening after a rainy day. All about them were the tender, yet vivid, colours of early spring--the fields beyond the edge of the campus, and the distant uplands, were veiled in green mist. Near Taylor the Judas-tree was in purple bloom, and further away the Japanese cherries lifted pink sprays against a soft grey sky. Lilian was moved to an appreciation that did not exclude a quality the picture received from the dignity of the buildings, or even from the well-kept condition of turf and walks. She turned to Clara. "No one can ever

know," she said, "how glad I am to come back."

It was the day before commencement. Lilian Coles was in the library, selecting some books to take away for the summer. She went to a window that looked toward Rosemont and Villa Nova. She had come to have a sense of wide distances from this window. For the moment, with a swift, scarcely-conscious recognition of new ideals, new standards of life, she felt in herself something of the triumphant onward rush of the Winged Victory dominating this end of the library. This morning the sky was deep blue with a few white clouds. The air was fresh, the trees and grass very green. The slope beyond the tennis-courts was white with daisies. Some professors, in white flannels, were playing tennis on the nearest courts. Girls in white duck or fluffy muslins were moving toward the gymnasium. The college breakfast was to be there at twelve o'clock. Lilian was going. She had refused all invitations until her examinations were over. Then she went to several teas, to a picnic luncheon and to the class supper. She intended to go to the *alumnæ* banquet Thursday evening.

Lilian found her place at one of the long tables in the gymnasium beside Clara West and opposite Hester Grey. The balustrade of the running-track had been transformed into a frieze of mountain laurel. Laurel and ferns decorated the tables.

The breakfast was nearly over, and the black waiters were serving the ices.

"Can you see Lilian Coles?" Blanche bent around an intervening neighbour to ask Katherine. Katherine, happy in the fact that she would get a degree on the morrow, looked across the tables just as Lilian touched glasses with a freshman, her lips moving in the chorus,

"Here's to Bryn Mawr College!"

It was Hester Grey who saw a solemn look on Lilian's face as they rose to join in "*Manus Bryn Mawrensium*." But at that moment it seemed to Lilian herself, that of all the "*lætissimæ puellæ*" she, in her way, was the most joyful.

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## THE STRIKE AT GLASSCOCK'S.

From the Internet Archive etext of *A Book of True Lovers*, by Octave Thanet  
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*'Tis in vain to kick when a man is once fettered.* — Montaigne,

^ ^ T F you call these arrangements primitive," said my friend, the colonel, flashing his white teeth through the lint-dusted atmosphere of the cotton gin, and, with one sweep of the arm, indicating the three chambers of the mill — cotton gin, lumber mill and grist mill — "if you are moved to your very unnecessary and impolite mirth by such little trifles as engines running without a fence around them, I wish you could have seen a mill I saw last week." Then, being properly importuned, he told me about it

"I was riding through the bottom, after some timber I wanted to look at, with a view to selling, and somehow I lost my way. I came out on a new clearing. I never had seen it before, or the fence about the thrifty garden, or the house of lumber, built tight and three-fourths painted, with a man on a ladder, slapping the yellow paint on the battened walls; or the shed of a mill on the river bank, under a great water oak. Not a wisp of smoke drifted out of the rusty stovepipe that was the mill chimney. There wasn't a sound, either, except the calls of the birds and the cheeping of a crowd of chickens in the front yard.

" I hailed the man, and he got his neck and one shoulder around far enough to stare at me.

"\* That a mill?' says L

" \*Used to be, yesterday,\* says he.

" \* Sell me some meal for my horse ? '

" \* No, sir. All out, and ain't runnin'.'

"\* What 's the matter ? '

\*\* \* Crew on a strike. '

" \* What 's the matter with them ? '

\*'The man deliberately hooked his pail over the ladder, and leisurely descended. He was a long, gaunt old fellow, well grizzled, and his tough old face was scored with a network of wrinkles. His gray beard had a close curl to it, as had his silky gray hair, and his blue eyes twinkled in a half shrewd, half humorous way that was rather prepossessing'. He was clean, too, which is a distinction in some parts of this country. \* Ob-  
stinate as the devil,' I said to myself, ^ but most likely honest, and knows a joke when he sees one.' I knew he was fixing to tell me the whole story the minute he swung\* off from the ladder.

"\*Set down,' said he; ^mought as well res' you' hoss a spell ; hot day to-day, and mussiful man 's mussif ul to his beastis, ye know. Have drink er muscadine cider ?'

^' He brought a drink that came out of a stone jug^ slung in the well, and tasted cool and pleasant. In return I handed him a cig^r ; and we were at once on most amicable terms. \* Yes, 'he resumed, ^/i5 kinder embarrassin', Saturday comin' on to-morrer, and most like folks comin' round fer meal, to be fixed this here way ; an' I tole the widder so, but thar warn't no movin' of her.'

" \* The widow? '

"\*Yes, sir' — he had one of the soft, slurring voices that you don't hear out of the south, voices that linger on the vowels. and let the consonants get along by themselves; for my part I like to hear our people talk, just for the sound of it — \*yes, sir, the widder, my wife. Nice a woman as you U ever meet up with, and good a cook, tew, but the Lord made most wimmen fools, and all on ^em stubborn. And once git her set, thar ain't no movin' of the widder. So here I be, with nothin' but my own cookin' to depend on, an' mill shut down.'

"\*You mean your wife and you have parted? ' said I, using the common expression of the country.

"\* Parted be d dl' bawled he, firing

instantly, ^ parted nothin' I Didn't I tell you she ben on the strike? '

•\* \* And your mill crew also? '

" \* Well, stranger,' was his sardonic comment, \* you don't look nigh as dumb as ye be. Bless ye, sAe air the crew I '

"\* The mill crew?'

" \* Yes, sir, the plumb crew; how much of a crew do you expect? '

" \* Aren't you a little short-handed? '

" \* Course we ain't. Come down to that mill and I '11 show you. We got a daisy engine^ peart as ye cud ask. I run the saw when we air a-sawin', and she pumps the bar! full er water; and we got a inspirator to draw it into the engine^ and when we use that up we stop and fire her up agin. She pumps the water and chops up the slabs that I saw off fur the engine, and I run the saw or the grist. Every feller that comes dips his own sack full out of the box and feeds the huUer, tew; so we don't have nare trouble. We didnH — tell she struck.\*

"\* Why did she strike?'

" \* Well, it warn't fur wages, ezackly, nor it warn't agin the union — natchelly not, seein' we air the union ourselves. What ruined our fambly is just cravin' fur style and show, and the natchell yearnin' of wimmen to have their own way. We 'd of been married thirty-three year come next September, and we hain't never had no 'casion fer havin' a house paintid, when she got it inter her head, or Susan Ma'y put it thar, that she wanted a paintid house. She tole

me of a Sunday that she 'd ben dwellin' on  
the idee fur a right smart.

«4 4 4«Ye best ondwell, then," says L

\*^ Paint air onhealthy , and I don't want none  
er it in mine/" " Tain't neither," says she;  
\*' the cholera is comin', and the doctors say  
paint — fresh paint — is a perventative,"  
says she, terrible uppish. But it wam't no  
perventative she ben ayfter. It ben fur  
the looks of the thing, and I knowed it. Ye  
see, the widder alius had a hankerin' fur  
fine things. We ain't got no less 'n four  
rockin' cheers to our house. Fact. And  
she won't w'ar a sunbunnet to church. Got  
to have a bunnet or a straw hat. An' she  
kinder tolled me inter paintin' an' paperin'  
inside tell we was so dadgun^med fine she  
cudn't have my old dog inside in muddy  
weather. 'Clare, that made me mad. An'  
what made me madder, she had to git a  
stove in the room, an' I hadn't nare place  
on earth to spit in 'cept a box ! What do  
you reckon 'bout that? Air that the way to  
treat a self-respectin' citizen with a white  
skin — makin' of him spit in a box? Oh, it  
air all Susy Ma'y, her daughter—/ knows  
her. She married a man ain't got no no-  
tions 'cept to please her ! Dretful fool 's ye  
ever did see ! Make^ a heap er money run-  
nin' a mill, an' got a house fur her made  
outer a book. Yes, sir, I seen it in the book.  
Gits things fur his mill outer a book, tew.  
Has hig-h's fifteen men foolin' with that  
mill, an' lumber ain't planed a bit better 'n  
mine. Got a cotton gin on it, and grinds  
cotton, tew.'

^\* It was plain his disapproval of his son-  
in-law struggled with pride in his posses-  
sions; but I had seen that sort of thing be-  
fore, and I knew enough to keep my mouth  
shut. He went on describing the glories  
of Susan Ma'y's house and yard. She had  
a carpet with roses on it, and china vases,  
and a clock, and a gold watch, and curtains  
in the windows, and lamps with white  
shades over the chimneys made it light as

day all night. 'And she puts the widder up to all manner er nonsense, ' he concluded, ferociously.

" \* That 's your step-daughter, I suppose, ' said I, to keep the conversation brisk, and get the old man in the humor to let me get some meal, somehow, for my horse. The poor beast had the lampers, and needed soft food.

" \* Step-daughter I ' said he, sharply ; \* no, she ain't ; widder an\* me ain't never ben married, 'cept to each other.'

" \* Oh, it was only from her being called Mrs. — your wife's daughter, and you calling your wife the widow,' I hazarded.

" ' That 's 'cause she favors her maw, an' ain't got nare sense like me,' he snarled back. \* Ain't you never heard married folks talk afore ? An' I calls her the widder, 'cause if I was to die she wud be the widder Glasscock, wudn't she? She 'd stay so, too I An' she mought ez well begin to hear it. We ain't got nare nother child nor Susan Ma'y, neither. Now you got us straight in you' mind, stranger?'

"\*I reckon,' said I.

\*\* \* Well, so ye have, I kin go on to the p'int. We kep' at it. She ben wantin' of me to take a paper, ^\*so we'll know the news," says she. I says, "We ain't no need er news, 'cept what we kin git oncet a month, at preachin'," but I says, when this come up, "If I'll git ye a paper oncet a week will ye quit bellerin' at me?" Says she, " I dunno how to b\*ar hit without we git the house paintid." "Ye cayn't have the house paintid," says I, " but I 'U git ye the paper," And I done got her the paper. And she read it to me reg'lar. She kin read the best in the world, right off; nev' does have to stop an' spell, not even to whisper words off to herseff. An' she use to read all 'bout them strikes an' sich —

reckon ye know on 'em? \*

" \* I 've heard,' said L

" \* Kinder fool things, to my notion, but she got dredful struck by 'em. An' she kep' at me 'bout the paint — axed me twicet in one week — "say, squire, ain't you goin' to paint?" — jest like that, mighty fine an' mincin'. "No, I ain't," says I; "you quit you' foolin' 'bout paint or I 'U K^\\youl " — jest like that, awful stern an' determined. I 'lowed it wud shet her up. Sayd it to her twicet. Fust time she didn't say nary, jest taken a bite on her snuff stick, an' santered off. Nex' time she says, right low an' pleasant, " Say, squire, if I was to pay fur the paint wud it make ary differ in you' feelin's?" "You ain't got nare money," says I, fur I knowed she done spent ever' last cent she gfot from her chickens on a colt she bought fur me ter go ridin\*. ' His countenance wore the queerest expression over the last sentence ; I believe he wanted to convey to me, without telling, that his rebellious wife really did, as we call it down here, set a heap of store by him. He went on, scraping the dried paint off the palms of his hands as he talked, with his finger nails. \* " You ain't got nare money.'\* I sayd that. " How come ye cayn't let me work it out at the mill? " says she. " I isn't to pay you fur workin' to the mill," says I; "I never did pay ye one cent." " Time ye begun, then," says she, " fur I don't 'low to strike nary nuther lick ter the mill tell ye gives me you' word 'bout that ar paint." " Oh, you' goin' to strike, be ye? " says I. "All right fur you." And I went home, mad. I cudn't someway b'ar to be beat by her cussedness, and I kep' a-turnin' an' a-turnin' it over, an' studyin' 'bout it, an' I reckon I got madder an' madder, fur to tell ye the hones' truth, stranger, I ben fixin' ter give in to that ar fool woman, seein' how she did work so good ever' other way; an' fact is, I had bougfht that ar paint to the store — leastways I had priced it — ^an' I 'lowed if she begged right hard I cud ride over an' git it, nex'

mornin', mud not bein' more 'n shoe-mouth  
deep, nowhar, an' road good\* So, natchelly,  
that made me all the madder, me meanin'  
so well by her, an' her cuttin' up rough that  
way, an' doin' me so mean I So — we was  
out to the paschure — we all got a right fine  
paschure an' some mighty nice cows — an'  
she ben a milkin' when I named the matter  
to her — so I jest lit out an' left her a-milk-  
in'. Didn't offer to help tote the pails or  
nothin'; jest went a-streakin' back with my  
mad up I Say, stranger, you married? '

"I said I was so fortunate\*

\*\*\*Well, then,' and he rolled the scrap-  
ings of paint into a ball in the hollow of his  
palms, and gave a sigh of relief, \* then you  
know thar ain't nare nother critter on earth  
kin make ye mad as you' wife; an' looks  
like the more ye think on her, the madder  
she kin rile ye\* I ben that mad I cudn't  
see straight; an' when, as I turned awray,  
all choked up, I heerd the swish, splash of  
the milk drappin' into the pail, steady like.  
an\* knowed she hadn't turned a h'ar fur  
all my r'arin' an' chargin' — looked like I  
wanted to spite her wuss 'n I ever did want  
any thin' I But I turns 'round, an' I say d,  
"Mistress Glasscock," says I, \*'to-morrer  
is Saturday, an' thar is like to be ten men,  
maybe, 'long here to have their corn ground.  
Do you mean to tell me ye won't help me  
with them men a-grindin'?" "I mean I  
done struck," says she, "like them men  
you read on\* You knows on what terms  
I 11 come back — the house prommussed to  
be paintid." An' she went at the cow agin,  
swish, splash. \*\* All right fur you I " says I.  
And I never did turn my head on her agin,  
but I walked right spang home, and I went  
in, an' I nailed a bar agin all three er the  
doors, an' then I got the kettle an' the coffee  
pot on the stove, an' went out an' cut some  
meat an' got it a-sizzlin', an' I sot down.  
D'reckly I heerd her a-comin'\* Then she  
tried the door\* We didn't have nare locks  
nur bolts on the doors, an' I 'lowed she mis-  
trustid ; but I set dumb 's a wil' hog when

ye stick him. One by one, she tried ever' last door. Then she spoke\* \*\* What is you aimin' to do, Sam Glasscock?" says she, kinder flustered like; an' I answered back, "You' mig-hty sharp. Mistress Glasscock, but you cayn't cut me. I read the papers, tew. If you' a-strikin', I 'm a-lockin' ye out. That ar's what I air aimin' at. Mistress Glasscock! " \*

" He paused to let me appreciate the impressiveness of his retort, and flung\* the little ball of paint at a hen that had strayed into the garden and was nibbling\* at the rows of peas.

" • What did she say,' said I.

" He sig-hed heavily, and said : \* She jest kinder laug-hed, rig-ht spiteful like, an', ayfter a plumb minnit, endurin' wich she hadn't made nare sound er rattlin' the winders, nur poundin' on the doors, nur nary, an' I ben kinder coolin' off, she sayd: \*\* Sam, if ye want to fix it that a way, you kin ; but when ye want me back, remember I ain't a-comin', less 'n to a paintid house." She nev' did say nuthin' more. I waited on her to speak, cause I ben gettin' more an' more cooled off, but I didn't hear nuthin', an' bymeby, when I come to look out' — he got up, frowned and shook himself as a dog wiH, you know, before he concluded — 'well, that 's all; she were plumb gone I '

'\* Somehow, for all his bravado, I guessed that it had hurt him.

"In a moment or two, he went on his plaint, with his back to me : \* We all ben man an' wife fur thirty-three year, an\* we ain't never did ben apart a night before ; an' it ben ever' mite her fault, I tole myself. But I reckon I hadn't orter locked her out Hay, stranger ? '

" 'I reckon you would have done better to have let her in and talked it over peaceably,' said I.

" \* You reckon I best paintid the house f er her?' It was comical, the v^ray he flung those sentences over his shoulder at me, never once turning around.

"\* Can you afford it ? '

"•Course I kin.'

""Hasn't she been a good wife to you, every other way ? '

" \* Ain't I done tole ye that ? Nobody in this yere kentry has got a better woman than me.'

^' Still he kept his broad back to me; but his shoulder wrig-gled at each question.

" ' You 'd better give in, then,' said I.

\*\* He exploded in a second, flung\* himself round on me, swinging\* his fists and snorting\*, swelling\* like an enraged hen.

" ' Give in, ' he screamed, \* you bet I won't give in I I ain't that kind er man — /ain't I Why, look a here, I fund out better 'n that by the papers. Ain't she struck ? '

""Surely,' said I.

•\* \* Ain't I done locked her out ? '

" \* So it appears,' said I.

" \* Well, ' triumphantly he spread his hands apart, glistening with paint, \* what do they do in the papers in these yere contests atween labor an' capitil ? Is labor — that 's her — goin' to give in? Not much; it ain't got the sense I Is capitil — that's me — goin' to lay down? Never I ' — he slapped his painted jeans with a sounding thud with both hands — 'Well, how is you to manage ? How does them great contestin' pyarties manage? Why, nohuddy gives in. They finds somebody they kin have confidence in.

an' they leaves it to him, an' both on 'em will abide by his decidin'.'

" \* I see,' said I gravely, \* and I '

" \* You air the arbitration committee, an' don't you ferget it. You decide fur paint, paint it is I '

"I ventured to suggest that he had started on the paint before the committee decided. His foot was already on the last round of the ladder and his hand outstretched to unhook the pail ; but he cast a withering glance at me. \* Stranger, ' he remarked, in a low, impressive voice, ' I done lived on my own cookin' ever sence last Friday week ; an' does you reely reckon I air goin' to monkey round y ere waitin'on a arbitration committee an' doin' nuthin'? No, sir. I knowed aforehand what a decent arbitrationer wud say, an\*, w'ilst I ben waitin\* fur one to come by, I jest laid the paint on lively. It 'll be all on afore sundown, this evenin,' an' I kin git to Susan Ma'y, my daughter's, afore long; an' the widder has jest natchelly got to submit to the arbitrationer, tew, an' come 'long home; an' ef the fraish paint makes her plumb sick, tain't nare fault er mine I An' I never will paint agin. '

^So saying-y he addressed himself so vigorously to his painting that I rather felt myself in the way. However, I interrupted him long enough to inquire my road, and then I took it, since cornmeal, under the present strained relations of labor and capital at Glasscock's, seemed out of reach. I had not gone very far before I came upon what we call a hack; that is, a spring wagon drawn by a very good pair of horses, and driven by a woman much better dressed than one will often see on a country road. Beside her sat a little, wiry, meek-faced old woman in a sunbonnet. I didn't need to see them turn down the cross-road to Glasscock's, to make out that there had been some sort of an arbitration committee for the party of the second part, also.

^ I lodged that night not far from the mill, and in the morning I rode back to it. The smokestack was puffing away. Outside a small figure, in a short blue gown, was swinging an ax with a most extraordinary agility. It was the crew of the mill, evidently, going to work with that zeal which is always mentioned in the newspapers after a strike ends. The mill itself, on nearer approach, turned out to be a mere shell. There was a funny little engine, and, sure enough, there were the barrel and the pump and the inspirator ; and as soon as the barrel was pumped full the engine could start up. While I halted my horse and looked through one side (it had all one side open, so no doors were needed), the whistle blew and the engineer began to pump ; in no time the mill started up.

\* Within the grist mill there was a pile of corn on the floor, and old Glasscock was shoveling corn into the box of the sheller. The corn cobs poured out at one end and the shelled corn came in a more or less jerky stream from the middle. Glasscock, at intervals, would stop shoveling and kick the pile of corn away from the mouth of the sheller. Presently, the water barrel being emptied, the mill shut down. While the mill crew heaped slabs into the furnace the miller sifted the corn through a clumsy wire sieve and then put it into the funnel above the buhr stones. He threw off the belt from the sheller and set the grist mill going; and, as soon as the wheezing of the desultory little engine was heard, the meal began to come snowing out of the funnel below. There was a box ready to receive it, and this box he emptied into the barrel standing near.

"Noticing my horse's shadow on the floor, he glanced up. He beckoned to me to approach. \* That 's her I \* he said, dropping his voice and gazing with undisguised pride and satisfaction on the busy little figure ; \* ain't she a terror to work ? Ain't it

worth arbitratin' a leetle to git sech a crew  
back ? An' she don't put on no airs. She  
done begged my pardon, right humble.  
Wudn't mad me fur nuthin', now. Don't  
she keep a-movin' peart, though ? Sayd she  
nev' would say paint to me agin. This yere  
eggspierience done humbled her shore —  
plumb humbled her I '

"He dwelt with such unction on the  
words, and she did seem so mild a creature,  
that I began to wonder where the victory  
in the present contest between labor and  
capital really belonged. Wondering, I de-  
parted, although they pressed me to stay,  
and I began to see then a lively gratitude  
on the part of Mrs. Glasscock that has given  
me many a frying chicken since\* Just as I  
was leaving, old Glasscock sidled up to me.  
\*Say,\* he muttered, 'most like you'll be  
goin' by the store at the cross-roads; say,  
tell 'em to mix me up another batch er that  
paint. It'll be time fur the second coat  
next week I '"

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## THE STORY OF DEIRDRE

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Celtic Folk and Fairy Tales*, by Various

There was a man in Ireland once who was called Malcolm Harper. The man was a right good man, and he had a goodly share of this world's goods. He had a wife, but no family. What did Malcolm hear but that a soothsayer had come home to the place, and as the man was a right good man, he wished that the soothsayer might come near them. Whether it was that he was invited or that he came of himself, the soothsayer came to the house of Malcolm.

"Are you doing any soothsaying?" says Malcolm.

"Yes, I am doing a little. Are you in need of soothsaying?"

"Well, I do not mind taking soothsaying from you, if you had soothsaying for me, and you would be willing to do it."

"Well, I will do soothsaying for you. What kind of soothsaying do you want?"

"Well, the soothsaying I wanted was that you would tell me my lot or what will happen to me, if you can give me knowledge of it."

"Well, I am going out, and when I return I will tell you."

And the soothsayer went forth out of the house, and he was not long outside when he returned.

"Well," said the soothsayer, "I saw in my second sight that it is on account of a daughter of yours that the greatest amount of blood shall be shed that has ever been shed in Erin since time and race began. And the three most famous heroes that ever were found will lose their heads on her account."

After a time a daughter was born to Malcolm. He did not allow a living being to come to his house, only himself and the nurse. He asked this woman, "Will you yourself bring up the child to keep her in hiding far away where eye will not see a sight of her nor ear hear a word about her?"

The woman said she would, so Malcolm got three men, and he took them away to a large mountain, distant and far from reach, without the knowledge or notice of any one. He caused there a hillock, round and green, to be dug out of the middle, and the hole thus made to be covered carefully over, so that a little company could dwell there together. This was done.

Deirdre and her foster-mother dwelt in the bothy mid the hills without the knowledge or the suspicion of any living person about them and without anything occurring, until Deirdre was sixteen years of age. Deirdre grew like the white sapling, straight and trim as the rash on the moss. She was the creature of fairest form, of loveliest aspect, and of gentlest nature that existed between earth and heaven in all Ireland--whatever colour of hue she had before, there was nobody that looked into her face but she would blush fiery red over it.

The woman that had charge of her gave Deirdre every information and skill of which she herself had knowledge and skill. There was not a blade of grass growing from root, nor a bird singing in the wood, nor a star shining from heaven but Deirdre had a name for it. But one thing, she did not wish her to have either part or parley with any single living man of the rest of the world. But on a gloomy winter night, with black, scowling clouds, a hunter of game was wearily travelling the hills, and what happened but that he missed the trail of the hunt, and lost his course and companions. A drowsiness came upon the man as he wearily wandered over the hills, and he laid down by the side of the beautiful green knoll in which Deirdre lived, and he slept. The man was faint from hunger and wandering, and benumbed with cold, and a deep sleep fell upon him. When he lay down beside

the green hill where Deirdre was, a troubled dream came to the man, and he thought that he enjoyed the warmth of a fairy broch, the fairies being inside playing music. The hunter shouted out in his dream if there was any one in the broch, to let him in for the Holy One's sake. Deirdre heard the voice, and said to her foster-mother, "O foster-mother, what cry is that?" "It is nothing at all, Deirdre--merely the birds of the air astray and seeking each other. But let them go past to the bosky glade. There is no shelter or house for them here." "O foster-mother, the bird asked to get inside for the sake of the God of the Elements, and you yourself tell me that anything that is asked in His name we ought to do. If you will not allow the bird that is being benumbed with cold, and done to death with hunger, to be let in, I do not think much of your language or your faith. But since I give credence to your language and to your faith, which you taught me, I will myself let in the bird." And Deirdre arose and drew the bolt from the leaf of the door, and she let in the hunter. She placed a seat in the place for sitting, food in the place for eating, and drink in the place for drinking for the man who came to the house. "Oh, for this life and raiment, you man that came in, keep restraint on your tongue!" said the old woman. "It is not a great thing for you to keep your mouth shut and your tongue quiet when you get a home and shelter of a hearth on a gloomy winter's night." "Well," said the hunter, "I may do that--keep my mouth shut and my tongue quiet, since I came to the house and received hospitality from you; but by the hand of thy father and grandfather, and by your own two hands, if some other of the people of the world saw this beauteous creature you have here hid away, they would not long leave her with you, I swear."

"What men are these you refer to?" said Deirdre.

"Well, I will tell you, young woman," said the hunter, "They are Naois, son of Uisnech, and Allen and Arden his two brothers."

"What like are these men when seen, if we were to see them?" said Deirdre.

"Why, the aspect and form of the men when seen are these," said the hunter; "they have the colour of the raven on their hair, their skin like swan on the wave in whiteness, and their cheeks as the blood of the brindled red calf, and their speed and their leap are those of the salmon of the torrent and the deer of the grey mountain side. And Naois is head and shoulders over the rest of the people of Erin."

"However they are," said the nurse, "be you off from here and take another road. And, King of Light and Sun! in good sooth and certainty, little are my thanks for yourself or for her that let you in!"

The hunter went away, and went straight to the palace of King

Connachar. He sent word in to the king that he wished to speak to him if he pleased. The king answered the message and came out to speak to the man. "What is the reason of your journey?" said the king to the hunter.

[Illustration: Deirdre. O Nurse what cry is that!

Only the birds of the air calling one to the other.--  
There is no home for them here. Let them go by to the thicket.]

"I have only to tell you, O king," said the hunter. "that I saw the fairest creature that ever was born in Erin, and I came to tell you of it."

"Who is this beauty, and where is she to be seen, when she was not seen before till you saw her, if you did see her?"

"Well, I did see her," said the hunter. "But, if I did, no man else can see her unless he get directions from me as to where she is dwelling."

"And will you direct me to where she dwells? and the reward of your directing me will be as good as the reward of your message," said the king.

"Well, I will direct you, O king, although it is likely that this will not be what they want," said the hunter.

Connachar, king of Ulster, sent for his nearest kinsmen, and he told them of his intent. Though early rose the song of the birds mid the rocky caves and the music of the birds in the grove, earlier than that did Connachar, king of Ulster, arise, with his little troop of dear friends, in the delightful twilight of the fresh and gentle May; the dew was heavy on each bush and flower and stem, as they went to bring Deirdre forth from the green knoll where she stayed. Many a youth was there who had a lithe, leaping and lissom step when they started whose step was faint, failing, and faltering when they reached the bothy on account of the length of the way and roughness of the road. "Yonder, now, down in the bottom of the glen is the bothy where the woman dwells, but I will not go nearer than this to the old woman," said the hunter.

Connachar with his band of kinsfolk went down to the green knoll where Deirdre dwelt and he knocked at the door of the bothy. The nurse replied, "No less than a king's command and a king's army could put me out of my bothy to-night. And I should be obliged to you, were you to tell who it is that wants me to open my bothy door." "It is I, Connachar, king of Ulster." When the poor woman heard who was at the door, she rose with haste and let in the king and all that could get

in of his retinue.

When the king saw the woman that was before him that he had been in quest of, he thought he never saw in the course of the day nor in the dream of night a creature so fair as Deirdre and he gave his full heart's weight of love to her. Deirdre was raised on the topmost of the heroes' shoulders and she and her foster-mother were brought to the Court of King Connachar of Ulster.

With the love that Connachar had for her, he wanted to marry Deirdre right off there and then, will she nill she marry him. But she said to him, "I would be obliged to you if you will give me the respite of a year and a day." He said, "I will grant you that, hard though it is, if you will give me your unfailing promise that you will marry me at the year's end." And she gave the promise. Connachar got for her a woman-teacher and merry modest maidens fair that would lie down and rise with her, that would play and speak with her. Deirdre was clever in maidenly duties and wifely understanding, and Connachar thought he never saw with bodily eye a creature that pleased him more. Deirdre and her women companions were one day out on the hillock behind the house enjoying the scene, and drinking in the sun's heat. What did they see coming but three men a-journeying. Deirdre was looking at the men that were coming, and wondering at them. When the men neared them, Deirdre remembered the language of the huntsman, and she said to herself that these were the three sons of Uisnech, and that this was Naois, he having what was above the bend of the two shoulders above the men of Erin all. The three brothers went past without taking any notice of them, without even glancing at the young girls on the hillock. What happened but that love for Naois struck the heart of Deirdre, so that she could not but follow after him. She girded up her raiment and went after the men that went past the base of the knoll, leaving her women attendants there. Allen and Arden had heard of the woman that Connachar, king of Ulster, had with him, and they thought that, if Naois, their brother, saw her, he would have her himself, more especially as she was not married to the king. They perceived the woman coming, and called on one another to hasten their step as they had a long distance to travel, and the dusk of night was coming on. They did so. She cried: "Naois, son of Uisnech, will you leave me?" "What piercing, shrill cry is that--the most melodious my ear ever heard, and the shrillest that ever struck my heart of all the cries I ever heard?" "It isn't anything else but the wail of the wave-swans of Connachar," said his brothers. "No! yonder is a woman's cry of distress," said Naois, and he swore he would not go further until he saw from whom the cry came, and Naois turned back. Naois and Deirdre met, and Deirdre kissed Naois three times, and a kiss each to his brothers. With the confusion that she was in, Deirdre went into a crimson blaze of fire, and her colour came and went as rapidly as the movement of the aspen by the stream side. Naois thought he never saw a fairer creature, and Naois gave Deirdre the love that he never gave to

thing, to vision, or to creature but to herself.

Then Naois placed Deirdre on the topmost height of his shoulder, and told his brothers to keep up their pace, and they kept up their pace. Naois thought that it would not be well for him to remain in Erin on account of the way in which Connachar, king of Ulster, his uncle's son, had gone against him because of the woman, though he had not married her; and he turned back to Alba, that is, Scotland. He reached the side of Loch Ness and made his habitation there. He could kill the salmon of the torrent from out his own door, and the deer of the grey gorge from out his window. Naois and Deirdre and Allen and Arden dwelt in a tower, and they were happy so long a time as they were there.

By this time the end of the period came at which Deirdre had to marry Connachar, king of Ulster. Connachar made up his mind to take Deirdre away by the sword whether she was married to Naois or not. So he prepared a great and gleeful feast. He sent word far and wide through Erin to all his kinspeople to come to the feast. Connachar thought to himself that Naois would not come though he should bid him, and the scheme that arose in his mind was to send for his father's brother, Ferchar Mac Ro, and to send him on an embassy to Naois. He did so; and Connachar said to Ferchar, "Tell Naois, son of Uisnech, that I am setting forth a great and gleeful feast to my friends and kinspeople throughout the wide extent of Erin all, and that I shall not have rest by day nor sleep by night if he and Allen and Arden be not partakers of the feast."

Ferchar Mac Ro and his three sons went on their journey, and reached the tower where Naois was dwelling by the side of Loch Etive. The sons of Uisnech gave a cordial kindly welcome to Ferchar Mac Ro and his three sons, and asked of him the news of Erin. "The best news that I have for you," said the hardy hero, "is that Connachar, king of Ulster, is setting forth a great sumptuous feast to his friends and kinspeople throughout the wide extent of Erin all, and he has vowed by the earth beneath him, by the high heaven above him, and by the sun that wends to the west, that he will have no rest by day nor sleep by night if the sons of Uisnech, the sons of his own father's brother, will not come back to the land of their home and the soil of their nativity, and to the feast likewise, and he has sent us on embassy to invite you."

"We will go with you," said Naois.

"We will," said his brothers.

But Deirdre did not wish to go with Ferchar Mac Ro, and she tried every prayer to turn Naois from going with him--she said:

"I saw a vision, Naois, and do you interpret it to me," said

Deirdre--then she sang:

O Naois, son of Uisnech, hear  
What was shown in a dream to me.

There came three white doves out of the South  
Flying over the sea,  
And drops of honey were in their mouth  
From the hive of the honey-bee.

O Naois, son of Uisnech, hear  
What was shown in a dream to me.

I saw three grey hawks out of the South  
Come flying over the sea,  
And the red drops they bare in their mouth  
They were dearer than life to me.

Said Naois:

It is nought but the fear of woman's heart,  
And a dream of the night, Deirdre.

"The day that Connachar sent the invitation to his feast will be  
unlucky for us if we don't go, O Deirdre."

"You will go there," said Ferchar Mac Ro; "and if Connachar show  
kindness to you, show ye kindness to him; and if he will display wrath  
towards you display ye wrath towards him, and I and my three sons will  
be with you."

"We will," said Daring Drop. "We will," said Hardy Holly. "We will,"  
said Fiallan the Fair.

"I have three sons, and they are three heroes, and in any harm or  
danger that may befall you, they will be with you, and I myself will  
be along with them." And Ferchar Mac Ro gave his vow and his word in  
presence of his arms that, in any harm or danger that came in the way  
of the sons of Uisnech, he and his three sons would not leave head on  
live body in Erin, despite sword or helmet, spear or shield, blade or  
mail, be they ever so good.

Deirdre was unwilling to leave Alba, but she went with Naois. Deirdre  
wept tears in showers and she sang:

Dear is the land, the land over there,  
Alba full of woods and lakes;  
Bitter to my heart is leaving thee,  
But I go away with Naois.

Ferchar Mac Ro did not stop till he got the sons of Uisnech away with him, despite the suspicion of Deirdre.

The coracle was put to sea,  
The sail was hoisted to it;  
And the second morrow they arrived  
On the white shores of Erin.

As soon as the sons of Uisnech landed in Erin, Ferchar Mac Ro sent word to Connachar, king of Ulster, that the men whom he wanted were come, and let him now show kindness to them. "Well," said Connachar, "I did not expect that the sons of Uisnech would come, though I sent for them, and I am not quite ready to receive them. But there is a house down yonder where I keep strangers, and let them go down to it to-day, and my house will be ready before them to-morrow."

But he that was up in the palace felt it long that he was not getting word as to how matters were going on for those down in the house of the strangers. "Go you, Gelban Grednach, son of Lochlin's King, go you down and bring me information as to whether her former hue and complexion are on Deirdre. If they be, I will take her out with edge of blade and point of sword, and if not, let Naios, son of Uisnech, have her for himself," said Connachar.

Gelban, the cheering and charming son of Lochlin's King, went down to the place of the strangers, where the sons of Uisnech and Deirdre were staying. He looked in through the bicker-hole on the door-leaf. Now she that he gazed upon used to go into a crimson blaze of blushes when any one looked at her. Naois looked at Deirdre and knew that some one was looking at her from the back of the door-leaf. He seized one of the dice on the table before him and fired it through the bicker-hole, and knocked the eye out of Gelban Grednach the Cheerful and Charming, right through the back of his head. Gelban returned back to the palace of King Connachar.

"You were cheerful, charming, going away, but you are cheerless, charmless, returning. What has happened to you, Gelban? But have you seen her, and are Deirdre's hue and complexion as before?" said Connachar.

"Well, I have seen Deirdre, and I saw her also truly, and while I was looking at her through the bicker-hole on the door, Naois, son of Uisnech, knocked out my eye with one of the dice in his hand. But of a truth and verity, although he put out even my eye, it were my desire still to remain looking at her with the other eye, were it not for the hurry you told me to be in," said Gelban.

"That is true," said Connachar; "let three hundred brave heroes go

down to the abode of the strangers, and let them bring hither to me Deirdre, and kill the rest."

Connachar ordered three hundred active heroes to go down to the abode of the strangers, and to take Deirdre up with them and kill the rest. "The pursuit is coming," said Deirdre.

"Yes, but I will myself go out and stop the pursuit," said Naois.

"It is not you, but we that will go," said Daring Drop, and Hardy Holly, and Fiallan the Fair; "it is to us that our father entrusted your defence from harm and danger when he himself left for home." And the gallant youths, full noble, full manly, full handsome, with beauteous brown locks, went forth girt with battle arms fit for fierce fight and clothed with combat dress for fierce contest fit, which was burnished, bright, brilliant, bladed, blazing, on which were many pictures of beasts and birds, and creeping things, lions, and lithe-limbed tigers, brown eagle, and harrying hawk, and adder fierce; and the young heroes laid low three-thirds of the company.

Connachar came out in haste and cried with wrath; "Who is there on the floor of fight, slaughtering my men?"

"We, the three sons of Ferchar Mac Ro."

"Well," said the king, "I will give a free bridge to your grandfather, a free bridge to your father, and a free bridge each to you three brothers, if you come over to my side to-night."

"Well, Connachar, we will not accept that offer from you, nor thank you for it. Greater by far do we prefer to go home to our father and tell the deeds of heroism we have done, than accept anything on these terms from you. Naois, son of Uisnech, and Allen and Arden are as nearly related to yourself as they are to us, though you are so keen to shed their blood, and you would shed our blood also, Connachar." And the noble, manly, handsome youths, with beauteous brown locks, returned inside. "We are now," said they, "going home to tell our father that you are now safe from the hands of the king." And the youths, all fresh and tall and lithe and beautiful, went home to their father to tell that the sons of Uisnech were safe. This happened at the parting of the day and night in the morning twilight time, and Naois said they must go away, leave that house, and return to Alba.

Naois and Deirdre, Allen and Arden started to return to Alba. Word came to the king that the company he was in pursuit of were gone. The king then sent for Duanan Gacha Druid, the best magician he had, and he spake to him as follows: "Much wealth have I expended on you, Duanan Gacha Druid, to give schooling and learning and magic mystery to you, I'll hold you to account if these people get away from me

to-day without care, without consideration or regard for me, without chance of overtaking them, and without power to stop them."

"Well, I will stop them," said the magician, "until the company you send in pursuit return." And the magician placed a wood before them through which no man could go, but the sons of Uisnech marched through the wood without halt or hesitation, and Deirdre held on to Naois's hand.

"What is the good of that? that will not do yet," said Connachar. "They are off without bending of their feet or stopping of their step, without heed or respect to me, and I am without power to keep up to them, or opportunity to turn them back this night."

"I will try another plan on them," said the druid; and he placed before them a grey sea instead of a green plain. The three heroes stripped and tied their clothes behind their heads, and Naois placed Deirdre on the top of his shoulder.

They stretched their sides to the stream,  
And sea and land were to them the same,  
The rough grey ocean was the same  
As meadow-land green and plain.

"Though that be good, O Duanan, it will not make the heroes return," said Connachar; "they are gone without regard for me, and without honor to me, and without power on my part to pursue them, or to force them to return this night."

[Illustration:]

"We shall try another method on them, since yon one did not stop them," said the druid. And the druid froze the grey-ridged sea into hard rocky knobs, the sharpness of sword being on the one edge and the poison power of adders on the other. Then Arden cried that he was getting tired, and nearly giving over. "Come you, Arden, and sit on my right shoulder," said Naois. Arden came and sat on Naois's shoulder. Arden was not long in this posture when he died; but though he was dead Naois would not let him go. Allen then cried out that he was getting faint and well-nigh giving up. When Naois heard his prayer, he gave forth the piercing sigh of death, and asked Allen to lay hold of him and he would bring him to land. Allen was not long when the weakness of death came on him, and his hold failed. Naois looked around, and when he saw his two well-beloved brothers dead, he cared not whether he lived or died, and he gave forth the bitter sigh of death, and his heart burst.

"They are gone," said Duanan Gacha Druid to the king, "and I have done what you desired me. The sons of Uisnech are dead and they will

trouble you no more; and you have your wife hale and whole to yourself."

"Blessings for that upon you and may the good results accrue to me, Duanan. I count it no loss what I spent in the schooling and teaching of you. Now dry up the flood and let me see if I can behold Deirdre," said Connachar. And Duanan Gacha Druid dried up the flood from the plain and the three sons of Uisnech were lying together dead, without breath of life, side by side on the green meadow plain and Deirdre bending above showering down her tears.

Then Deirdre said this lament: "Fair one, loved one, flower of beauty; beloved, upright, and strong; beloved, noble, and modest warrior. Fair one, blue-eyed, beloved of thy wife; lovely to me at the trysting-place came thy clear voice through the woods of Ireland. I cannot eat or smile henceforth. Break not to-day, my heart: soon enough shall I lie within my grave. Strong are the waves of sorrow, but stronger is sorrow's self, Connachar."

The people then gathered round the heroes' bodies and asked Connachar what was to be done with the bodies. The order that he gave was that they should dig a pit and put the three brothers in it side by side.

Deirdre kept sitting on the brink of the grave, constantly asking the gravediggers to dig the pit wide and free. When the bodies of the brothers were put in the grave, Deirdre said:

Come over hither, Naois, my love,  
Let Arden close to Allen lie;  
If the dead had any sense to feel,  
Ye would have made a place for Deirdre.

The men did as she told them. She jumped into the grave and lay down by Naois, and she was dead by his side.

The king ordered the body to be raised from out the grave and to be buried on the other side of the loch. It was done as the king bade, and the pit closed. Thereupon a fir shoot grew out of the grave of Deirdre and a fir shoot from the grave of Naois, and the two shoots united in a knot above the loch. The king ordered the shoots to be cut down, and this was done twice, until, at the third time, the wife whom the king had married caused him to stop this work of evil and his vengeance on the remains of the dead.

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# HIS SISTER

by Mary Applewhite Bacon

The Project Gutenberg eBook, *Different Girls*, by Various, Edited by William Dean Howells and Henry Mills Alden

"But you couldn't see me leave, mother, anyway, unless I was there to go."

It was characteristic of the girl adjusting her new travelling-hat before the dim little looking-glass that, while her heart was beating with excitement which was strangely like grief, she could give herself at once to her stepmother's inquietude and turn it aside with a jest.

Mrs. Morgan, arrested in her anxious movement towards the door, stood for a moment taking in the reasonableness of Stella's proposition, and then sank back to the edge of her chair. "The train gets here at two o'clock," she argued.

Lindsay Cowart came into the room, his head bent over the satchel he had been mending. "You had better say good-bye to Stella here at the house, mother," he suggested; "there's no use for you to walk down to the depot in the hot sun." And then he noticed that his stepmother had on her bonnet with the veil to it--she had married since his father's death and was again a widow,--and, in extreme disregard of the September heat, was dressed in the black worsted of a diagonal weave which she wore only on occasions which demanded some special tribute to their importance.

She began smoothing out on her knees the black gloves which, in her nervous haste to be going, she had been holding squeezed in a tight ball in her left hand. "I can get there, I reckon," she answered with mild brevity, and as if the young man's words had barely grazed her consciousness.

A moment later she went to the window and, with her back to Lindsay, poured the contents of a small leather purse into one hand and began to count them softly.

He looked up again. "I am going to pay for Stella's ticket, mother. You must not do it," he said.

She replaced the money immediately, but without impatience, and as acquiescing in his assumption of his sister's future. "You have done so much already," he apologized; but he knew that she was hurt, and chafed to feel that only the irrational thing on his part would have seemed to her the kind one.

Stella turned from the verdict of the dim looking-glass upon her

appearance to that of her brother's face. As she stood there in that moment of pause, she might have been the type of all innocent and budding life. The delicacy of floral bloom was in the fine texture of her skin, the purple of dewy violets in her soft eyes; and this new access of sadness, which was as yet hardly conscious of itself, had thrown over the natural gayety of her young girlhood something akin to the pathetic tenderness which veils the earth in the dawn of a summer morning.

He felt it to be so, but dimly; and, young himself and already strained by the exactions of personal desires, he answered only the look of inquiry in her face,--"Will the merchants here never learn any taste in dry-goods?"

Instantly he was sick with regret. Of what consequence was the too pronounced blue of her dress in comparison with the light of happiness in her dear face? How impossible for him to be here for even these few hours without running counter to some cherished illusion or dear habit of speech or manner.

"I tell you it's time we were going," Mrs. Morgan appealed, her anxiety returning.

"We have thirty-five minutes yet," Lindsay said, looking at his watch; but he gathered up the bags and umbrellas and followed as she moved ponderously to the door.

Stella waited until they were out in the hall, and then looked around the room, a poignant tenderness in her eyes. There was nothing congruous between its shabby walls and cheap worn furniture and her own beautiful young life; but the heart establishes its own relations, and tears rose suddenly to her eyes and fell in quick succession. Even so brief a farewell was broken in upon by her stepmother's call, and pressing her wet cheek for a moment against the discolored door-facing, she hurried out to join her.

Lindsay did not at first connect the unusual crowd in and around the little station with his sister's departure; but the young people at once formed a circle around her, into which one and another older person entered and retired again with about the same expressions of affectionate regret and good wishes. He had known them all so long! But, except for the growing up of the younger boys and girls during his five years of absence, they were to him still what they had been since he was a child, affecting him still with the old depressing sense of distance and dislike. The grammarless speech of the men, the black-rimmed nails of Stella's schoolmaster--a good classical scholar, but heedless as he was good-hearted,--jarred upon him, indeed, with the discomfort of a new experience. Upon his own slender, erect figure, clothed in poor but well-fitting garments, gentleman was written as plainly as in words,

just as idealist was written on his forehead and the other features which thought had chiselled perhaps too finely for his years.

The brightness had come back to Stella's face, and he could not but feel grateful to the men who had left their shops and dingy little stores to bid her good-by, and to the placid, kindly-faced women ranged along the settees against the wall and conversing in low tones about how she would be missed; but the noisy flock of young people, who with their chorus of expostulations, assurances, and prophecies seemed to make her one of themselves, filled him with strong displeasure. He knew how foolish it would be for him to show it, but he could get no further in his effort at concealment than a cold silence which was itself significant enough. A tall youth with bold and handsome features and a pretty girl in a showy red muslin ignored him altogether, with a pride which really quite overmatched his own; but the rest shrank back a little as he passed looking after the checks and tickets, either cutting short their sentences at his approach or missing the point of what they had to say. The train seemed to him long in coming.

His stepmother moved to the end of the settee and made a place for him at her side. "Lindsay," she said, under cover of the talk and laughter, and speaking with some difficulty, "I hope you will be able to carry out all your plans for yourself and Stella; but while you're making the money, she will have to make the friends. Don't you ever interfere with her doing it. From what little I have seen of the world, it's going to take both to carry you through."

His face flushed a little, but he recognized her faithfulness and did it honor. "That is true, mother, and I will remember what you say. But I have some friends," he added, in enforced self-vindication, "in Vacluse if not here."

A whistle sounded up the road. She caught his hand with a swift accession of tenderness towards his youth. "You've done the best you could, Lindsay," she said. "I wish you well, my son, I wish you well." There were tears in her eyes.

George Morrow and the girl in red followed Stella into the car, not at all disconcerted at having to get off after the train was in motion. "Don't forget me, Stella," the girl called back. "Don't you ever forget Ida Brand!"

There was a waving of hands and handkerchiefs from the little station, aglare in the early afternoon sun. A few moments later the train had rounded a curve, shutting the meagre village from sight, and, to Lindsay Cowart's thought, shutting it into a remote past as well.

He arose and began rearranging their luggage. "Do you want these?" he inquired, holding up a bouquet of dahlias, scarlet sage, and purple

petunias, and thinking of only one answer as possible.

"I will take them," she said, as he stood waiting her formal consent to drop them from the car window. Her voice was quite as usual, but something in her face suggested to him that this going away from her childhood's home might be a different thing to her from what he had conceived it to be. He caught the touch of tender vindication in her manner as she untied the cheap red ribbon which held the flowers together and rearranged them into two bunches so that the jarring colors might no longer offend, and felt that the really natural thing for her to do was to weep, and that she only restrained her tears for his sake. Sixteen was so young! His heart grew warm and brotherly towards her youth and inexperience; but, after all, how infinitely better that she should have cause for this passing sorrow.

He left her alone, but not for long. He was eager to talk with her of the plans about which he had been writing her the two years since he himself had been a student at Vaucluse, of the future which they should achieve together. It seemed to him only necessary for him to show her his point of view to have her adopt it as her own; and he believed, building on her buoyancy and responsiveness of disposition, that nothing he might propose would be beyond the scope of her courage.

"It may be a little lonely for you at first," he told her. "There are only a handful of women students at the college, and all of them much older than you; but it is your studies at last that are the really important thing, and I will help you with them all I can. Mrs. Bancroft will have no other lodgers and there will be nothing to interrupt our work."

"And the money, Lindsay?" she asked, a little anxiously.

"What I have will carry us through this year. Next summer we can teach and make almost enough for the year after. The trustees are planning to establish a fellowship in Greek, and if they do and I can secure it--and Professor Wayland thinks I can,--that will make us safe the next two years until you are through."

"And then?"

He straightened up buoyantly. "Then your two years at Vassar and mine at Harvard, with some teaching thrown in along the way, of course. And then Europe--Greece--all the great things!"

She smiled with him in his enthusiasm. "You are used to such bold thoughts. It is too high a flight for me all at once."

"It will not be, a year from now," he declared, confidently.

A silence fell between them, and the noise of the train made a pleasant accompaniment to his thoughts as he sketched in detail the work of the coming months. But always as a background to his hopes was that honorable social position which he meant eventually to achieve, the passion for which was a part of his Southern inheritance. Little as he had yet participated in any interests outside his daily tasks, he had perceived in the old college town its deeply grained traditions of birth and custom, perceived and respected them, and discounted the more their absence in the sorry village he had left. Sometime when he should assail it, the exclusiveness of his new environment might beat him back cruelly, but thus far it existed for him only as a barrier to what was ultimately precious and desirable. One day the gates would open at his touch, and he and the sister of his heart should enter their rightful heritage.

The afternoon waned. He pointed outside the car window. "See how different all this is from the part of the State which we have left," he said. "The landscape is still rural, but what mellowness it has; because it has been enriched by a larger, more generous human life. One can imagine what this whole section must have been in those old days, before the coming of war and desolation. And Vaucluse was the flower, the centre of it all!" His eye kindled. "Some day external prosperity will return, and then Vaucluse and her ideals will be needed more than ever; it is she who must hold in check the commercial spirit, and dominate, as she has always done, the material with the intellectual." There was a noble emotion in his face, reflecting itself in the younger countenance beside his own. Poor, young, unknown, their hearts thrilled with pride in their State, with the possibility that they also should give to her of their best when the opportunity should be theirs.

"It is a wonderful old town," Lindsay went on again. "Even Wayland says so,--our Greek professor, you know." His voice thrilled with the devotion of the hero-worshipper as he spoke the name. "He is a Harvard man, and has seen the best of everything, and even he has felt the charm of the place; he told me so. You will feel it, too. It is just as if the little town and the college together had preserved in amber all that was finest in our Southern life. And now to think you and I are to share in all its riches!"

His early consecration to such a purpose, the toil and sacrifice by which it had been achieved, came movingly before her; yet, mingled with her pride in him, something within her pleaded for the things which he rated so low. "It used to be hard for you at home, Lindsay," she said, softly.

"Yes, it was hard." His face flushed. "I never really lived till I left there. I was like an animal caught in a net, like a man struggling for air. You can't know what it is to me now to be with people who are thinking of something else than of how to make a few dollars in a

miserable country store."

"But they were good people in Bowersville, Lindsay," she urged, with gentle loyalty.

"I am sure they were, if you say so," he agreed. "But at any rate we are done with it all now." He laid his hand over hers. "At last I am going to take you into our own dear world."

It was, after all, a very small world as to its actual dimensions, but to the brother it had the largeness of opportunity, and to Stella it seemed infinitely complex. She found security at first only in following minutely the programme which Lindsay had laid out for her. It was his own as well, and simple enough. Study was the supreme thing; exercise came in as a necessity, pleasure only as the rarest incident. She took all things cheerfully, after her nature, but after two or three months the color began to go from her cheeks, the elasticity from her step; nor was her class standing, though creditable, quite what her brother had expected it to be.

Wayland detained him one day in his class-room. "Do you think your sister is quite happy here, Cowart?" he asked.

The boy thrilled, as he always did at any special evidence of interest from such a source, but he had never put this particular question to himself and had no reply at hand.

"I have never thought this absolute surrender to books the wisest thing for you," Wayland went on; "but for your sister it is impossible. She was formed for companionship, for happiness, not for the isolation of the scholar. Why did you not put her into one of the girls' schools of the State, where she would have had associations more suited to her years?" he asked, bluntly.

Lindsay could scarcely believe that he was listening to the young professor whose scholarly attainments seemed to him the sum of what was most desirable in life. "Our girls' colleges are very superficial," he answered; "and even if they were not, she could get no Greek in any of them."

"My dear boy," Wayland said, "the amount of Greek which your sister knows or doesn't know will always be a very unimportant matter; she has things that are so infinitely more valuable to give to the world. And deserves so much better things for herself," he added, drawing together his texts for the next recitation.

Lindsay returned to Mrs. Bancroft's quiet, old-fashioned house in a sort of daze. "Stella," he said, "do you think you enter enough into the social side of our college life?"

"No," she answered. "But I think neither of us does."

"Well, leave me out of the count. If I get through my Junior year as I ought, I am obliged to grind; and when there is any time left, I feel that I must have it for reading in the library. But it needn't be so with you. Didn't an invitation come to you for the reception Friday evening?"

Her face grew wistful. "I don't care to go to things, Lindsay, unless you will go with me," she said.

Nevertheless, he had his way, and when once she made it possible, opportunities for social pleasures poured in upon her. As Wayland had said, she was formed for friendship, for joy; and that which was her own came to her unsought. She was by nature too simple and sweet to be spoiled by the attention she received; the danger perhaps was the less because she missed in it all the comradeship of her brother, without which in her eyes the best things lost something of their charm. It was not merely personal ambition which kept him at his books; the passion of the scholar was upon him and made him count all moments lost that were spent away from them. Sometimes Stella sought him as he pored over them alone, and putting her arm shyly about him, would beg that he would go with her for a walk, or a ride on the river; but almost always his answer was the same: "I am so busy, Stella dear; if you knew how much I have to do you would not even ask me."

There was one interruption, indeed, which the young student never refused. Sometimes their Greek professor dropped in at Mrs. Bancroft's to bring or to ask for a book; sometimes, with the lovely coming of the spring, he would join them as they were leaving the college grounds, and lead them away into some of the woodland walks, rich in wild flowers, that environed the little town. Such hours seemed to both brother and sister to have a flavor, a brightness, quite beyond what ordinary life could give. Wayland, too, must have found in them his own share of pleasure, for he made them more frequent as the months went by.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was in the early spring of her second year at Vaucluse that the accident occurred. The poor lad who had taken her out in the boat was almost beside himself with grief and remorse.

"We had enjoyed the afternoon so much," he said, trying to tell how it had happened. "I thought I had never seen her so happy, so gay,--but you know she was that always. It was nearly sunset, and I remember how she spoke of the light as we saw it through the open spaces of the woods and as it slanted across the water. Farther down the river the yellow jasmine was beginning to open. A beech-tree that leaned out over the

water was hung with it. She wanted some, and I guided the boat under the branches. I meant to get it for her myself, but she was reaching up after it almost before I knew it. The bough that had the finest blossoms on it was just beyond her reach, and while I steadied the boat, she pulled it towards her by one of the vines hanging from it. She must have put too much weight on it--

"It all happened so quickly. I called to her to be careful, but while I was saying the words the vine snapped and she fell back with such force that the boat tipped, and in a second we were both in the water. I knew I could not swim, but I hoped that the water so near the bank would be shallow; and it was, but there was a deep hole under the roots of the tree."

He could get no further. Poor lad! the wonder was that he had not been drowned himself. A negro ploughing in the field near by saw the accident and ran to his help, catching him as he was sinking for the third time. Stella never rose after she went down; her clothing had been entangled in the roots of the beech.

Sorrow for the young life cut off so untimely was deep and universal, and sought to manifest itself in tender ministrations to the brother so cruelly bereaved. But Lindsay shrank from all offices of sympathy, and except for seeking now and then Wayland's silent companionship, bore his grief alone.

The college was too poor to establish the fellowship in Greek, but the adjunct professor in mathematics resigned, and young Cowart was elected to his place, with the proviso that he give two months further study to the subject in the summer school of some university. Wayland decided which by taking him back with him to Cambridge, where he showed the boy an admirable friendship.

Lindsay applied himself to his special studies with the utmost diligence. It was impossible, moreover, that his new surroundings should not appeal to his tastes in many directions; but in spite of his response to these larger opportunities, his friend discerned that the wound which the young man kept so carefully hidden had not, after all these weeks, begun even slightly to heal.

Late on an August night, impelled as he often was to share the solitude which Lindsay affected, he sought him at his lodgings, and not finding him, followed what he knew was a favorite walk with the boy, and came upon him half hidden under the shadows of an elm in the woods that skirted Mount Auburn. "I thought you might be here," he said, taking the place that Lindsay made for him on the seat. Many words were never necessary between them.

The moon was full and the sky cloudless, and for some time they sat in

silence, yielding to the tranquil loveliness of the scene and to that inner experience of the soul brooding over each, and more inscrutable than the fathomless vault above them.

"I suppose we shall never get used to a midnight that is still and at the same time lustrous, as this is to-night," Wayland said. "The sense of its uniqueness is as fresh whenever it is spread before us as if we had never seen it before."

It was but a part of what he meant. He was thinking how sorrow, the wide sense of personal loss, was in some way like the pervasiveness, the voiceless speech, of this shadowed radiance around them.

He drew a little nearer the relaxed and slender figure beside his own. "It is of her you are thinking, Lindsay," he said, gently, and mentioning for the first time the young man's loss. "All that you see seems saturated with her memory. I think it will always be so--scenes of exceptional beauty, moments of high emotion, will always bring her back."

The boy's response came with difficulty: "Perhaps so. I do not know. I think the thought of her is always with me."

"If so, it should be for strength, for comfort," his friend pleaded. "She herself brought only gladness wherever she came."

There was something unusual in his voice, something that for a moment raised a vague questioning in Lindsay's mind; but absorbed as he was in his own sadness, it eluded his feeble inquiry. To what Wayland had said he could make no reply.

"Perhaps it is the apparent waste of a life so beautiful that seems to you so intolerable--" He felt the strong man's impulse to arrest an irrational grief, and groped for the assurance he desired. "Yet, Lindsay, we know things are not wasted; not in the natural world, not in the world of the spirit." But on the last words his voice lapsed miserably, and he half rose to go.

Lindsay caught his arm and drew him back. "Don't go yet," he said, brokenly. "I know you think it would help me if I would talk about--Stella; if I should tell it all out to you. I thank you for being willing to listen. Perhaps it will help me."

He paused, seeking for some words in which to express the sense of poverty which scourged him. Of all who had loved his sister, he himself was left poorest! Others had taken freely of her friendship, had delighted themselves in her face, her words, her smile, had all these things for memories. He had been separated from her, in part by the hard conditions of their youth, and at the last, when they had been together,

by his own will. Oh, what had been her inner life during these last two years, when it had gone on beside his own, while he was too busy to attend?

But the self-reproach was too bitter for utterance to even the kindest of friends. "I thought I could tell you," he said at last, "but I can't. Oh, Professor Wayland," he cried, "there is an element in my grief that is peculiar to itself, that no one else in sorrow ever had!"

"I think every mourner on earth would say that, Lindsay." Again the younger man discerned the approach of a mystery, but again he left it unchallenged.

The professor rose to his feet. "Good night," he said; "unless you will go back with me. Even with such moonlight as this, one must sleep." He had dropped to that kind level of the commonplace by which we spare ourselves and one another.

"Where the love light never, never dies,"

The boy's voice ringing out blithely through the drip and dampness of the winter evening marked his winding route across the college grounds. Lindsay Cowart, busy at his study table, listened without definite effort and placed the singer as the lad newly come from the country. He could have identified any other of the Vaucluse students by connections as slight--Marchman by his whistling, tender, elusive sounds, flute notes sublimated, heard only when the night was late and the campus still; others by tricks of voice, fragments of laughter, by their footfalls, even, on the narrow brick walk below his study window. Such the easy proficiency of affection.

Attention to the lad's singing suddenly was lifted above the subconscious. The simple melody had entangled itself in some forgotten association of the professor's boyhood, seeking to marshal which before him, he received the full force of the single line sung in direct ear-shot. Like the tune, the words also became a challenge; pricked through the unregarded heaviness in which he was plying his familiar task, and demanded that he should name its cause.

For him the love light of his marriage had been dead so long! No, not dead; nothing so dignified, so tragic. Burnt down, smoldered; suffocated by the hateful dust of the commonplace. There was a touch of contempt in the effort with which he dismissed the matter from his mind and turned back to his work. And yet, he stopped a moment longer to think, for him life without the light of love fell so far below its best achievement!

The front of his desk was covered with the papers in mathematics over which he had spent his evenings for more than a week. Most of them had

been corrected and graded, with the somewhat full comment or elucidation here and there which had made his progress slow. He examined a half-dozen more, and then in sheer mental revolt against the subject, slipped them under the rubber bands with others of their kind and dropped the neat packages out of his sight into one of the drawers of the desk. Wayland's book on Greece, the fruit of eighteen months' sojourn there, had come through the mail on the same day when the calculus papers had been handed in, and he had read it through at once, not to be teased intolerably by its invitation. He had mastered the text, avid through the long winter night, but he picked it up again now, and for a little while studied the sumptuous illustrations. How long Wayland had been away from Vaucluse, how much of enrichment had come to him in the years since he had left! He himself might have gone also, to larger opportunities--he had chosen to remain, held by a sentiment! The professor closed the book with a little sigh, and taking it to a small shelf on the opposite side of the room, stood it with a half-dozen others worthy of such association.

Returning, he got together before him the few Greek authors habitually in hand's reach, whether handled or not, and from a compartment of his desk took out several sheets of manuscript, metrical translations from favorite passages in the tragedists or the short poems of the Anthology. Like the rest of the Vaucluse professors--a mere handful they were,--he was straitened by the hard exactions of class-room work, and the book which he hoped sometime to publish grew slowly. How far he was in actual miles from the men who were getting their thoughts into print, how much farther in environment! Things which to them were the commonplaces of a scholar's life were to him impossible luxuries; few even of their books found their way to his shelves. At least the original sources of inspiration were his, and sometimes he felt that his verses were not without spirit, flavor.

He took up a little volume of Theocritus, which opened easily at the Seventh Idyl, and began to read aloud. Half-way through the poem the door opened and his wife entered. He did not immediately adjust himself to the interruption, and she remained standing a few moments in the centre of the room.

"Thank you; I believe I will be seated," she said, the sarcasm in her words carefully excluded from her voice.

He wondered that she should find interest in so sorry a game. "I thought you felt enough at home in here to sit down without being asked," he said, rising, and trying to speak lightly.

She took the rocking-chair he brought for her and leaned back in it without speaking. Her maroon-colored evening gown suggested that whoever planned it had been somewhat straitened by economy, but it did well by her rich complexion and creditable figure. Her features were creditable

too, the dark hair a little too heavy, perhaps, and the expression, defined as it is apt to be when one is thirty-five, not wholly satisfying. In truth, the countenance, like the gown, suffered a little from economy, a sparseness of the things one loves best in a woman's face. Half the sensitiveness belonging to her husband's eyes and mouth would have made her beautiful.

"It is a pity the Barkers have such a bad night for their party," Cowart said.

"The reception is at the Fieldings';" and again he felt himself rebuked.

"I'm afraid I didn't think much about the matter after you told me the Dillinghams were coming by for you in their carriage. Fortunately neither family holds us college people to very strict social account."

"They have their virtues, even if they are so vulgar as to be rich."

"Why, I believe I had just been thinking, before you came in, that it is only the rich who have any virtues at all." He managed to speak genially, but the consciousness that she was waiting for him to make conversation, as she had waited for the chair, stiffened upon him like frost.

He cast about for something to say, but the one interest which he would have preferred to keep to himself was all that presented itself to his grasp. "I have often thought," he suggested, "that if only we were in sight of the Gulf, our landscape in early summer might not be very unlike that of ancient Greece." She looked at him a little blankly, and he drew one of his books nearer and began turning its leaves.

"I thought you were correcting your mathematics papers."

"I am, or have been; but I am reading Theocritus, too."

"Well, I don't see anything in a day like this to make anybody think of summer. The dampness goes to your very marrow."

"It isn't the day; it's the poetry. That's the good of there being poetry."

She skipped his parenthesis. "And you keep this room as cold as a vault." Not faultfinding, but a somewhat irritating concern for his comfort was in the complaint.

She went to the hearth and in her efficient way shook down the ashes from the grate and heaped it with coal. A cabinet photograph of a girl in her early teens, which had the appearance of having just been put there, was supported against a slender glass vase. Mrs. Cowart took it

up and examined it critically. "I don't think this picture does Arnoldina justice," she said. "One of the eyes seems to droop a little, and the mouth looks sad. Arnoldina never did look sad."

They were on common ground now, and he could speak without constraint. "I hadn't observed that it looked sad. She seems somehow to have got a good deal older since September."

"She is maturing, of course." All a mother's pride and approbation, were in the reserve of the speech. To have put more definitely her estimate of the sweet young face would have been a clumsy thing in comparison.

Lindsay's countenance lighted up. He arose, and standing by his wife, looked over her shoulder as she held the photograph to the light. "Do you know, Gertrude," he said, "there is something in her face that reminds me of Stella?"

"I don't know that I see it," she answered, indifferently, replacing the photograph and returning to her chair. The purpose which had brought her to the room rose to her face. "I stopped at the warehouse this afternoon," she said, "and had a talk with father. Jamieson really goes to Mobile--the first of next month. The place is open to you if you want it."

"But, Gertrude, how should I possibly want it?" he expostulated.

"You would be a member of the firm. You might as well be making money as the rest of them."

He offered no comment.

"It is not now like it was when you were made professor. The town has become a commercial centre and its educational interests have declined. The professors will always have their social position, of course, but they cannot hope for anything more."

"It is not merely Vacluse, but the South, that is passing into this phase. But economic independence has become a necessity. When once it is achieved, our people will turn to higher things."

"Not soon enough to benefit you and me."

"Probably not."

"Then why waste your talents on the college, when the best years of your life are still before you?"

"I am not teaching for money, Gertrude." He hated putting into the bald phrase his consecration to his ideals for the young men of his State; he

hated putting it into words at all; but something in his voice told her that the argument was finished.

There was a sound of carriage wheels on the drive. He arose and began to assist her with her wraps. "It is too bad for you to be dependent on even such nice escorts as the Dillinghams are," he solaced, recovering himself. "We college folk are a sorry lot."

But when she was gone, the mood for composition which an hour before had seemed so near had escaped him, and he put away his books and manuscript, standing for a while, a little chilled in mind and body, before the grate and looking at the photograph on the mantel. While he did so the haunting likeness he had seen grew more distinct and by degrees another face overspread that of his young daughter, the face of the sister he had loved and lost.

With a sudden impulse he crossed the room to an old-fashioned mahogany secretary, opened its slanting lid, and unlocking with some difficulty a small inner drawer, returned with it to his desk. Several packages of letters tied with faded ribbon filled the small receptacle, but they struck upon him with the strangeness of something utterly forgotten. The pieces of ribbon had once held for him each its own association of time or place; now he could only remember, looking down upon them with tender gaze, that they had been Stella's, worn in her hair, or at her throat or waist. Simple and inexpensive he saw they were. Arnoldina would not have looked at them.

Overcoming something of reluctance, he took one of the packages from its place. It contained the letters he had found in her writing-table after her death, most of them written after she had come to Vacluse by her stepmother and the friends she had left in the village. He knew there was nothing in any of them she would have withheld from him; in reading them he was merely taking back something from the vanished years which, if not looked at now, would perish utterly from earth. How affecting they were--these utterances of true and humble hearts, written to one equally true and good! His youth and hers in the remote country village rose before him; not now, as once, pinched and narrow, but as salutary, even gracious. He could but feel how changed his standards had become since then, how different his measure of the great and the small of life.

Suddenly, as he was thus borne back into the past, the old sorrow sprang upon him, and he bowed before it. The old bitter cry which he had been able to utter to no human consoler swept once more to his lips: "Oh, Stella, Stella, you died before I really knew you; your brother, who should have known and loved you best! And now it is too late, too late."

He sent out as of old his voiceless call to one afar off, in some land

where her whiteness, her budding soul, had found their rightful place; but even as he did so, his thought of her seemed to be growing clearer. From that far, revered, but unimagined sphere she was coming back to the range of his apprehension, to comradeship in the life which they once had shared together.

He trembled with the hope of a fuller attainment, lifting his bowed head and taking another package of the letters from their place. Her letters! He had begged them of her friends in his desperate sense of ignorance, his longing to make good something of all that he had lost in those last two years of her life. What an innocent life it was that was spread before him; and how young,--oh, how young! And it was a happy life. He was astonished, after all his self-reproach, to realize how happy; to find himself smiling with her in some girlish drollery such as used to come so readily to her lips. He could detect, too, how the note of gladness, how her whole life, indeed, had grown richer in the larger existence of Vacluse. At last he could be comforted that, however it had ended, it was he who had made it hers.

He had been feeding eagerly, too eagerly, and under the pressure of emotion was constrained to rise and walk the floor, sinking at last into his armchair and gazing with unseeing eyes upon the ruddy coals in the grate. That lovely life, which he had thought could never in its completeness be his, was rebuilt before his vision from the materials which she herself had left. What he had believed to be loss, bitter, unspeakable even to himself, had in these few hours of the night become wealth.

His quickened thought moved on from plane to plane. He scanned the present conditions of his life, and saw with clarified vision how good they were. What it was given him to do for his students, at least what he was trying to do for them; the preciousness of their regard; the long friendship with his colleagues; the associations with the little community in which his lot was cast, limited in some directions as they might be; the fair demesne of Greek literature in which his feet were so much at home; his own literary gift, even if a slender one; his dear, dear child.

And Gertrude? Under the invigoration of his mood a situation which had long seemed unamenable to change resolved itself into new and simpler proportions. The worthier aspects of his home life, the finer traits of his wife's character, stood before him as proofs of what might yet be. His memory had kept no record of the fact that when in the first year of his youthful sorrow, sick for comfort and believing her all tenderness, he had married her, to find her impatient of his grief, nor of the many times since when she had appeared almost wilfully blind to his ideals and purposes. His judgment held only this, that she had never understood him. For this he had seldom blamed her; but to-night he blamed himself. Instead of shrinking away sensitively, keeping the vital part of his

life to himself and making what he could of it alone, he should have set himself steadily to create a place for it in her understanding and sympathy. Was not a perfect married love worth the minor sacrifices as well as the supreme surrender from which he believed that neither of them would have shrunk?

He returned to his desk and began to rearrange the contents of the little drawer. Among them was a small sandalwood box which had been their mother's, and which Stella had prized with special fondness. He had never opened it since her death, but as he lifted it now the frail clasp gave way, the lid fell back, and the contents slipped upon the desk. They were few: a ring, a thin gold locket containing the miniatures of their father and mother, a small tintype of himself taken when he first left home, and two or three notes addressed in a handwriting which he recognized as Wayland's. He replaced them with reverent touch, turning away even in thought from what he had never meant to see.

By and by he heard in the distance the roll of carriages returning from the Fieldings' reception. He replenished the fire generously, found a long cloak in the closet at the end of the hall, and waited the sound of wheels before his own door. "The rain has grown heavier," he said, drawing the cloak around his wife as she descended from the carriage. Something in his manner seemed to envelop her. He brought her into the study and seated her before the fire. She had expected to find the house silent; the glow and warmth of the room were grateful after the chill and darkness outside, her husband's presence after that vague sense of futility which the evening's gayety had left upon her.

"I suppose I ought to tell you about the party," she said, a little wearily; "but if you don't mind, I will wait till breakfast. Everybody was there, of course, and it was all very fine, as we all knew it would be. I hope you've enjoyed your Latin poets more."

"They are Greek, dear," he said. "I have been making translations from some of them now and then. Some day we will take a day off and then I'll read them to you. But neither the party nor the poets to-night. See, it is almost two o'clock."

"I knew it must be late. But you look as fresh as a child that has just waked from sleep."

"Perhaps I have just waked."

They rose to go up-stairs. "I will go in front and make a light in our room while you turn off the gas in the hall."

He paused for a moment after she had gone out and turned to a page in the Greek Anthology for a single stanza. Shelley's translation was

written in pencil beside it:

Thou wert the morning star among the living,  
Ere thy fair light had fled;  
Now, having died, thou art as Hesperus giving  
New splendor to the dead.

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## THE SHUTTERED HOUSE.

The Project Gutenberg eBook, *Ensign Knightley and Other Stories*, by A. E. W. Mason

If ever a man's pleasures jumped with his duties mine did in the year 1744, when, as a clerk in the service of the Royal African Company of Adventurers, I was despatched to the remote islands of Scilly in search of certain information which, it was believed, Mr. Robert Lovyes alone could impart. For even a clerk that sits all day conning his ledgers may now and again chance upon a record or name which will tickle his dull fancies with the suggestion of a story. Such a suggestion I had derived from the circumstances of Mr. Lovyes. He had passed an adventurous youth, during which he had for eight years been held to slavery by a negro tribe on the Gambia river; he had afterwards amassed a considerable fortune, and embarked it in the ventures of the Company; he had thereupon withdrawn himself to Tresco, where he had lived for twenty years: so much any man might know without provocation to his curiosity. The strange feature of Mr. Lovyes' conduct was revealed to me by the ledgers. For during all those years he had drawn neither upon his capital nor his interest, so that his stake in the Company grew larger and larger, with no profit to himself that any one could discover. It seemed to me, in fact, clean against nature that a man so rich should so disregard his wealth; and I busied myself upon the journey with discovering strange reasons for his seclusion, of which none, I may say, came near the mark, by so much did the truth exceed them all.

I landed at the harbour of New Grimsey, on Tresco, in the grey twilight of a September evening; and asking for Mr. Lovyes, was directed across a little ridge of heather to Dolphin Town, which lies on the eastward side of Tresco, and looks across Old Grimsey Sound to the island of St. Helen's. Dolphin Town, you should know, for all its grand name, boasts but a poor half-score of houses dotted about the ferns and bracken, with no semblance of order. One of the houses, however, attracted my notice--first, because it was built in two storeys, and was, therefore, by a storey taller than the rest; and, secondly, because all its windows were closely shuttered, and it wore in that falling light a drooping, melancholy aspect, like a derelict

ship upon the seas. It stood in the middle of this scanty village, and had a little unkempt garden about it inclosed within a wooden paling. There was a wicket-gate in the paling, and a rough path from the gate to the house door, and a few steps to the right of this path a well was sunk and rigged with a winch and bucket. I was both tired and thirsty, so I turned into the garden and drew up some water in the bucket. A narrow track was beaten in the grass between the well and the house, and I saw with surprise that the stones about the mouth of the well were splashed and still wet. The house, then, had an inmate. I looked at it again, but the shutters kept their secret: there was no glimmer of light visible through any chink. I approached the house, and from that nearer vantage discovered that the shutters were common planks fitted into the windows and nailed fast to the woodwork from without. Growing yet more curious, I marched to the door and knocked, with an inquiry upon my tongue as to where Mr. Lovyes lived. But the excuse was not needed; the sound of my blows echoed through the house in a desolate, solitary fashion, and no step answered them. I knocked again, and louder. Then I leaned my ear to the panel, and I distinctly heard the rustling of a woman's dress. I held my breath to hear the more surely. The sound was repeated, but more faintly, and it was followed by a noise like the closing of a door. I drew back from the house, keeping an eye upon the upper storey, for I thought it possible the woman might reconnoitre me thence. But the windows stared at me blind, unresponsive. To the right and left lights twinkled in the scattered dwellings, and I found something very ghostly in the thought of this woman entombed as it were in the midst of them and moving alone in the shuttered gloom. The twilight deepened, and suddenly the gate behind me whined on its hinges. At once I dropped to my full length on the grass--the gloom was now so thick there was little fear I should be discovered--and a man went past me to the house. He walked, so far as I could judge, with a heavy stoop, but was yet uncommon tall, and he carried a basket upon his arm. He laid the basket upon the doorstep, and, to my utter disappointment, turned at once, and so down the path and out at the gate. I heard the gate rattle once, twice, and then a click as its latch caught. I was sufficiently curious to desire a nearer view of the basket, and discovered that it contained food. Then, remembering me that all this while my own business waited, I continued on my way to Mr. Lovyes' house. It was a long building of a brownish granite, under Merchant's Point, at the northern extremity of Old Grimsey Harbour. Mr. Lovyes was sitting over his walnuts in the cheerless solitude of his dining-room--a frail old gentleman, older than his years, which I took to be sixty or thereabouts, and with the air of a man in a decline. I unfolded my business forthwith, but I had not got far before he interrupted me.

"There is a mistake," he said. "It is doubtless my brother Robert you are in search of. I am John Lovyes, and was, it is true, captured with my brother in Africa, but I escaped six years before he did, and

traded no more in those parts. We fled together from the negroes, but we were pursued. My brother was pierced by an arrow, and I left him, believing him to be dead."

I had, indeed, heard something of a brother, though I little expected to find him in Tresco too. He pressed upon me the hospitality of his house, but my business was with Mr. Robert, and I asked him to direct me on my path, which he did with some hesitation and reluctance. I had once more to pass through Dolphin Town, and an impulse prompted me to take another look at the shuttered house. I found that the basket of food had been removed, and an empty bucket stood in its place. But there was still no light visible, and I went on to the dwelling of Mr. Robert Lovyes. When I came to it, I comprehended his brother's hesitation. It was a rough, mean little cottage standing on the edge of the bracken close to the sea--a dwelling fit for the poorest fisherman, but for no one above that station, and a large open boat was drawn up on the hard beside it as though the tenant fished for his bread. I knocked at the door, and a man with a candle in his hand opened it.

"Mr. Robert Lovyes?" I asked.

"Yes, I am he." And he led the way into a kitchen, poor and mean as the outside warranted, but scrupulously clean and bright with a fire. He led the way, as I say, and I was still more mystified to observe from his gait, his height, and the stoop of his shoulders that he was the man whom I had seen carrying the basket through the garden. I had now an opportunity of noticing his face, wherein I could detect no resemblance to his brother's. For it was broader and more vigorous, with a great, white beard valancing it; and whereas Mr. John's hair was neatly powdered and tied with a ribbon, as a gentleman's should be, Mr. Robert's, which was of a black colour with a little sprinkling of grey, hung about his head in a tangled mane. There was but a two-years difference between the ages of the brothers, but there might have been a decade. I explained my business, and we sat down to a supper of fish, freshly caught, which he served himself. And during supper he gave me the information I was come after. But I lent only an inattentive ear to his talk. For my knowledge of his wealth, the picture of him as he sat in his great sea-boots and coarse seaman's vest, as though it was the most natural garb in the world, and his easy discourse about those far African rivers, made a veritable jumble of my mind. To add to it all, there was the mystery of the shuttered house. More than once I was inclined to question him upon this last account, but his manner did not promise confidences, and I said nothing. At last he perceived my inattention.

"I will repeat all this to-morrow," he said grimly. "You are, no doubt, tired. I cannot, I am afraid, house you, for, as you see, I have no room; but I have a young friend who happens by good luck to

stay this night on Tresco, and no doubt he will oblige me." Thereupon he led me to a cottage on the outskirts of Dolphin Town, and of all in that village nearest to the sea.

"My friend," said he, "is named Ginver Wyeth, and, though he comes from these parts, he does not live here, being a school-master on the mainland. His mother has died lately, and he is come on that account."

Mr. Wyeth received me hospitably, but with a certain pedantry of speech which somewhat surprised me, seeing that his parents were common fisherfolk. He readily explained the matter, however, over a pipe, when Mr. Lovyes had left us. "I owe everything to Mrs. Lovyes," he said. "She took me when a boy, taught me something herself, and sent me thereafter, at her own charges, to a school in Falmouth."

"Mrs. Lovyes!" I exclaimed.

"Yes," he continued, and, bending forward, lowered his voice. "You went up to Merchant's Point, you say? Then you passed Crudge's Folly--a house of two storeys with a well in the garden."

"Yes, yes!" I said.

"She lives there," said he.

"Behind those shutters!" I cried.

"For twenty years she has lived in the midst of us, and no one has seen her during all that time. Not even Robert Lovyes. Aye, she has lived behind the shutters."

There he stopped. I waited, thinking that in a little he would take up his tale, but he did not, and I had to break the silence.

"I had not heard that Mr. Robert was ever married," I said as carelessly as I might.

"Nor was he," replied Mr. Wyeth. "Mrs. Lovyes is the wife of John. The house at Merchant's Point is hers, and there twenty years ago she lived."

His words caught my breath away, so little did I expect them.

"The wife of John Lovyes!" I stammered, "but--" And I told him how I had seen Robert Lovyes carry his basket up the path.

"Yes," said Wyeth. "Twice a day Robert draws water for her at the well, and once a day he brings her food. It is in his house, too, that she lives--Crudge's Folly, that was his name for it, and the name

clings. But, none the less, she is the wife of John;" and with little more persuasion Mr. Wyeth told me the story.

"It is the story of a sacrifice," he began, "mad or great, as you please; but, mark you, it achieved its end. As a boy, I witnessed it from its beginnings. For it was at this very door that Robert Lovyes rapped when he first landed on Tresco on the night of the seventh of May twenty-two years ago, and I was here on my holidays at the time. I had been out that day in my father's lugger to the Poul, which is the best fishing-ground anywhere near Scilly, and the fog took us, I remember, at three of the afternoon. So what with that and the wind failing, it was late when we cast anchor in Grimsey Sound. The night had fallen in a brown mirk, and so still that the sound of our feet brushing through the ferns was loud, like the sweep of scythes. We sat down to supper in this kitchen about nine, my mother, my father, two men from the boat, and myself, and after supper we gathered about the fire here and talked. The talk in these parts, however it may begin, slides insensibly to that one element of which the noise is ever in our ears; and so in a little here were we chattering of wrecks and wrecks and wrecks and the bodies of dead men drowned. And then, in the thick of the talk, came the knock on the door--a light rapping of the knuckles, such as one hears twenty times a day; but our minds were so primed with old wives' tales that it fairly shook us all. No one stirred, and the knocking was repeated.

"Then the latch was lifted, and Robert Lovyes stepped in. His beard was black then--coal black, like his hair--and his face looked out from it pale as a ghost and shining wet from the sea. The water dripped from his clothes and made a puddle about his feet.

"How often did I knock?" he asked pleasantly. "Twice, I think. Yes, twice."

"Then he sat down on the settle, very deliberately pulled off his great sea-boots, and emptied the water out of them.

"What island is this?" he asked.

"Tresco."

"Tresco!" he exclaimed, in a quick, agitated whisper, as though he dreaded yet expected to hear the name. "We were wrecked, then, on the Golden Ball."

"Wrecked?" cried my father; but the man went on pursuing his own thoughts.

"I swam to an islet."

"It would be Norwithel,' said my father.

"Yes,' said he, 'it would be Norwithel.' And my mother asked curiously--

"You know these islands?' For his speech was leisurely and delicate, such as we heard neither from Scillonians nor from the sailors who visit St. Mary's.

"Yes,' he answered, his face breaking into a smile of unexpected softness, 'I know these islands. From Rosevean to Ganilly, from Peninnis Head to Maiden Bower: I know them well.'"

\* \* \* \* \*

At this point Mr. Wyeth broke off his story, and crossing to the window, opened it. "Listen!" he said. I heard as it were the sound of innumerable voices chattering and murmuring and whispering in some mysterious language, and at times the voices blended and the murmurs became a single moan.

"It is the tide making on the Golden Ball," said Mr. Wyeth. "The reef stretches seawards from St. Helen's island and half way across the Sound. You may see it at low tide, a ledge level as a paved causeway, and God help the ship that strikes on it!"

Even while he spoke, from these undertones of sound there swelled suddenly a great booming like a battery of cannon.

"It is the ledge cracking," said Mr. Wyeth, "and it cracks in the calmest weather." With that, he closed the window, and, lighting his pipe, resumed his story.

\* \* \* \* \*

"It was on that reef that Mr. Robert Lovyes was wrecked. The ship, he told us, was the schooner \_Waking Dawn\_, bound from Cardiff to Africa, and she had run into the fog about half-past three, when they were a mile short of the Seven Stones. She bumped twice on the reef, and sank immediately, with, so far as he knew, all her crew.

"So now,' Robert continued, tapping his belt, 'since I have the means to pay, I will make bold to ask for a lodging, and for this night I will hang up here my dripping garments to Neptune.'

"Me tabula sacer  
Votiva paries--'

"I began in the pride of my schooling, for I had learned that verse of

Horace but a week before.

"This, no doubt, is the Cornish tongue,' he interrupted gravely, 'and will you please to carry my boots outside?'

"What followed seemed to me then the strangest part of all this business, though, indeed, our sea-fogs come and go as often as not with a like abruptness. But the time of this fog's dispersion shocked the mind as something pitiless and arbitrary. For had the air cleared an hour before, the Waking Dawn would not have struck. I opened the door, and it was as though a panel of brilliant white was of a sudden painted on the floor. Robert Lovyes sprang up from the settle, ran past me into the open, and stood on the bracken in his stockinged feet. A little patch of fog still smoked on the shining beach of Tean; a scarf of it was twisted about the granite bosses of St. Helen's; and for the rest the moonlight sparkled upon the headlands and was spilled across miles of placid sea. There was a froth of water upon the Golden Ball, but no sign of the schooner sunk among its weeds.

"My father, however, and the two boatmen hurried down to the shore, while I was despatched with the news to Merchant's Point. My mother asked Mr. Lovyes his name, that I might carry it with me. But he spoke in a dreamy voice, as though he had not heard her.

"There were eight of the crew. Four were below, and I doubt if the four on deck could swim.'

"I ran off on my errand, and, coming back a little later with a bottle of cordial waters, found Mr. Lovyes still standing in the moonlight. He seemed not to have moved a finger. I gave him the bottle, with a message that any who were rescued should be carried to Merchant's Point forthwith, and that he himself should go down there in the morning.

"Who taught you Latin?' he asked suddenly.

"Mrs. Lovyes taught me the rudiments,' I began; and with that he led me on to talk of her, but with some cunning. For now he would divert me to another topic and again bring me back to her, so that it all seemed the vagrancies of a boy's inconsequent chatter.

"Mrs. Lovyes, who was remotely akin to the Lord Proprietor, had come to Tresco three years before, immediately after her marriage, and, it was understood, at her husband's wish. I talked of her readily, for, apart from what I owed to her bounty, she was a woman most sure to engage the affections of any boy. For one thing she was past her youth, being thirty years of age, tall, with eyes of the kindest grey, and she bore herself in everything with a tender toleration, like a woman that has suffered much.

"Of the other topics of this conversation there was one which later I had good reason to remember. We had caught a shark twelve feet long at the Poul that day, and the shark fairly divided my thoughts with Mrs. Lovyes.

"'You bleed a fish first into the sea,' I explained. 'Then you bait with a chad's head, and let your line down a couple of fathoms. You can see your bait quite clearly, and you wait.'

"'No doubt,' said Robert; 'you wait.'

"'In a while,' said I, 'a dim lilac shadow floats through the clear water, and after a little you catch a glimpse of a forked tail and waving fins and an evil devil's head. The fish smells at the bait and sinks again to a lilac shadow--perhaps out of sight; and again it rises. The shadow becomes a fish, the fish goes circling round your boat, and it may be a long while before he turns on his back and rushes at the bait.'

"'And as like as not, he carries the bait and line away.'

"'That depends upon how quick you are with the gaff,' said I. 'Here comes my father.'

"My father returned empty-handed. Not one of the crew had been saved.

"'You asked my name,' said Robert Lovyes, turning to my mother. 'It is Crudge--Jarvis Crudge.' With that he went to his bed, but all night long I heard him pacing his room.

"The next morning he complained of his long immersion in the sea, and certainly when he told his story to Mr. and Mrs. Lovyes as they sat over their breakfast in the parlour at Merchant's Point, he spoke with such huskiness as I never heard the like of. Mr. Lovyes took little heed to us, but went on eating his breakfast with only a sour comment here and there. I noticed, however, that Mrs. Lovyes, who sat over against us, bent her head forward and once or twice shook it as though she would unseat some ridiculous conviction. And after the story was told, she sat with no word of kindness for Mr. Crudge, and, what was yet more unlike her, no word of pity for the sailors who were lost. Then she rose and stood, steadying herself with the tips of her fingers upon the table. Finally she came swiftly across the room and peered into Mr. Crudge's face.

"'If you need help,' she said, 'I will gladly furnish it. No doubt you will be anxious to go from Tresco at the earliest. No doubt, no doubt you will,' she repeated anxiously.

"'Madame,' he said, 'I need no help, being by God's leave a man'--and he laid some stress upon the 'man,' but not boastfully--rather as though all \_women\_ did, or might need help, by the mere circumstance of their sex--'and as for going hence, why yesterday I was bound for Africa. I sailed unexpectedly into a fog off Scilly. I was wrecked in a calm sea on the Golden Ball--I was thrown up on Tresco--no one on that ship escaped but myself. No sooner was I safe than the fog lifted---'

"'You will stay?' Mrs. Lovyes interrupted. 'No?'

"'Yes,' said he, 'Jarvis Grudge will stay.'

"And she turned thoughtfully away. But I caught a glimpse of her face as we went out, and it wore the saddest smile a man could see.

"Mr. Grudge and I walked for a while in silence.

"'And what sort of a name has Mr. John Lovyes in these parts?' he asked.

"'An honest sort,' said I emphatically--'the name of a man who loves his wife.'

"'Or her money,' he sneered. 'Bah! a surly ill-conditioned dog, I'll warrant, the curmudgeon!'

"'You are marvellously recovered of your cold,' said I.

"He stopped, and looked across the Sound. Then he said in a soft, musing voice: 'I once knew just such another clever boy. He was so clever that men beat him with sticks and put on great sea-boots to kick him with, so that he lived a miserable life, and was subsequently hanged in great agony at Tyburn.'

"Mr. Grudge, as he styled himself, stayed with us for a week, during which time he sailed much with me about these islands; and I made a discovery. Though he knew these islands so well, he had never visited them before, and his knowledge was all hearsay. I did not mention my discovery to him, lest I should meet with another rebuff. But I was none the less sure of its truth, for he mistook Hanjague for Nornor, and Priglis Bay for Beady Pool, and made a number of suchlike mistakes. After a week he hired the cottage in which he now lives, bought his boat, leased from the steward the patch of ground in Dolphin Town, and set about building his house. He undertook the work, I am sure, for pure employment and distraction. He picked up the granite stones, fitted them together, panelled them, made the floors from the deck of a brigantine which came ashore on Annet, pegged down the thatch roof--in a word, he built the house from first to last with

his own hands and he took fifteen months over the business, during which time he did not exchange a single word with Mrs. Lovyes, nor anything more than a short 'Good-day' with Mr. John. He worked, however, with no great regularity. For while now he laboured in a feverish haste, now he would sit a whole day idle on the headlands; or, again, he would of a sudden throw down his tools as though the work overtaxed him, and, leaping into his boat, set all sail and run with the wind. All that night you might see him sailing in the moonlight, and he would come home in the flush of the dawn.

"After he had built the house, he furnished it, crossing for that purpose backwards and forwards between Tresco and St. Mary's. I remember that one day he brought back with him a large chest, and I offered to lend him a hand in carrying it. But he hoisted it on his back and took it no farther than the cottage in which he lived, where it remained locked with a padlock.

"Towards Christmas-time, then, the house was ready, but to our surprise he did not move into it. He seemed, indeed, of a sudden, to have lost all liking for it, and whether it was that he had no longer any work upon his hands, he took to following Mrs. Lovyes about, but in a way that was unnoticeable unless you had other reasons to suspect that his thoughts were following her.

"His conduct in this respect was particularly brought home to me on Christmas Day. The afternoon was warm and sunny, and I walked over the hill at Merchant's Point, meaning to bathe in the little sequestered bay beyond. From the top of the hill I saw Mrs. Lovyes walking along the strip of beach alone, and as I descended the hill-side, which is very deep in fern and heather, I came plump upon Jarvis Grudge, stretched full-length on the ground. He was watching Mrs. Lovyes with so greedy a concentration of his senses that he did not remark my approach. I asked him when he meant to enter his new house.

"I do not know that I ever shall,' he replied.

"Then why did you build it?' I asked.

"Because I was a fool!' and then he burst out in a passionate whisper. 'But a fool I was to stay here, and a fool's trick it was to build that house!' He shook his fist in its direction. 'Call it Grudge's Folly, and there's the name for it!' and with that he turned him again to spying upon Mrs. Lovyes.

"After a while he spoke again, but slowly and with his eyes fixed upon the figure moving upon the beach.

"Do you remember the night I came ashore? You had caught a shark that day, and you told me of it. The great lilac shadow which rises from

the depths and circles about the bait, and sinks again and rises again and takes--how long?--two years maybe before he snaps it.'

"'But he does not carry it away,' said I, taking his meaning.

"'Sometimes--sometimes," he snarled.

"'That depends on how quick we are with the gaff."

"'You!' he laughed, and taking me by the elbows, he shook me till I was giddy.

"'I owe Mrs. Lovyes everything,' I said. At that he let me go. The ferocity of his manner, however, confirmed me in my fears, and, with a boy's extravagance, I carried from that day a big knife in my belt.

"'The gaff, I suppose,' said Mr. Grudge with a polite smile when first he remarked it. During the next week, however, he showed more contentment with his lot, and once I caught him rubbing his hands and chuckling, like a man well pleased; so that by New Year's Eve I was wellnigh relieved of my anxiety on Mrs. Lovyes' account.

"'On that night, however, I went down to Grudge's cottage, and peeping through the window on my way to the door, I saw a strange man in the room. His face was clean-shaven, his hair tied back and powdered; he was in his shirt-sleeves, with a satin waistcoat, a sword at his side, and shining buckles to his shoes. Then I saw that the big chest stood open. I opened the door and entered.

"'Come in!' said the man, and from his voice I knew him to be Mr. Crudge. He took a candle in his hand and held it above his head.

"'Tell me my name,' he said. His face, shaved of its beard and no longer hidden by his hair, stood out distinct, unmistakable.

"'Lovyes,' I answered.

"'Good boy,' said he. 'Robert Lovyes, brother to John.'

"'Yet he did not know you,' said I, though, indeed, I could not wonder.

"'But she did,' he cried, with a savage exultation. 'At the first glance, at the first word, she knew me.' Then, quietly, 'My coat is on the chair beside you.'

"'I took it up. 'What do you mean to do?' I asked.

"'It is New Year's Eve,' he said grimly. 'The season of good wishes.

It is only meet that I should wish my brother, who stole my wife, much happiness for the next twelve months.'

"He took the coat from my hands.

"'You admire the coat? Ah! true, the colour is lilac.' He held it out at arm's length. Doubtless I had been staring at the coat, but I had not even given it a thought. 'The lilac shadow!' he went on, with a sneer. 'Believe me, it is the purest coincidence.' And as he prepared to slip his arm into the sleeve I flashed the knife out of my belt. He was too quick for me, however. He flung the coat over my head. I felt the knife twisted out of my hand; he stumbled over the chair; we both fell to the ground, and the next thing I know I was running over the bracken towards Merchant's Point with Robert Lovyes hot upon my heels. He was of a heavy build, and forty years of age. I had the double advantage, and I ran till my chest cracked and the stars danced above me. I clanged at the bell and stumbled into the hall.

"'Mrs. Lovyes!' I choked the name out as she stepped from the parlour.

"'Well?' she asked. 'What is it?'

"'He is following--Robert Lovyes!'

"She sprang rigid, as though I had whipped her across the face. Then, 'I knew it would come to this at the last,' she said; and even as she spoke Robert Lovyes crossed the threshold.

"'Molly,' he said, and looked at her curiously. She stood singularly passive, twisting her fingers. 'I hardly know you,' he continued. 'In the old days you were the wilfullest girl I ever clapped eyes on.'

"'That was thirteen years ago,' she said, with a queer little laugh at the recollection.

"He took her by the hand and led her into the parlour. I followed. Neither Mrs. Lovyes nor Robert remarked my presence, and as for John Lovyes, he rose from his chair as the pair approached him, stretched out a trembling hand, drew it in, stretched it out again, all without a word, and his face purple and ridged with the veins.

"'Brother,' said Robert, taking between his fingers half a gold coin, which was threaded on a chain about Mrs. Lovyes' wrist, 'where is the fellow to this? I gave it to you on the Gambia river, bidding you carry it to Molly as a sign that I would return.'

"I saw John's face harden and set at the sound of his brother's voice. He looked at his wife, and, since she now knew the truth, he took the bold course.

"'I gave it to her,' said he, 'as a token of your death; and, by God! she was worth the lie!'"

"The two men faced one another--Robert smoothing his chin, John with his arms folded, and each as white and ugly with passion as the other. Robert turned to Mrs. Lovyes, who stood like a stone.

"'You promised to wait,' he said in a constrained voice. 'I escaped six years after my noble brother.'"

"'Six years?' she asked. 'Had you come back then you would have found me waiting.'"

"'I could not,' he said. 'A fortune equal to your own--that was what I promised to myself before I returned to marry you.'"

"'And much good it has done you,' said John, and I think that he meant by the provocation to bring the matter to an immediate issue. 'Pride, pride!' and he wagged his head. 'Sinful pride!'"

"Robert sprang forward with an oath, and then, as though the movement had awakened her, Mrs. Lovyes stepped in between the two men, with an arm outstretched on either side to keep them apart.

"'Wait!' she said. 'For what is it that you fight? Not, indeed, for me. To you, my husband, I will no more belong; to you, my lover, I cannot. My woman's pride, my woman's honour--those two things are mine to keep.'"

"So she stood casting about for an issue, while the brothers glowered at one another across her. It was evident that if she left them alone they would fight, and fight to the death. She turned to Robert.

"'You meant to live on Tresco here at my gates, unknown to me; but you could not.'"

"'I could not,' he answered. 'In the old days you had spoken so much of Scilly--every island reminded me--and I saw you every day.'"

"I could read the thought passing through her mind. It would not serve for her to live beside them, visible to them each day. Sooner or later they would come to grips. And then her face flushed as the notion of her great sacrifice came to her.

"'I see but the one way,' she said. 'I will go into the house that you, Robert, have built. Neither you nor John shall see me, but none the less, I shall live between you, holding you apart, as my hands do now. I give my life to you so truly that from this night no one shall

see my face. You, John, shall live on here at Merchant's Point. Robert, you at your cottage, and every day you will bring me food and water and leave it at my door.'

"The two men fell back shamefaced. They protested they would part and put the world between them; but she would not trust them. I think, too, the notion of her sacrifice grew on her as she thought of it. For women are tenacious of sacrifice even as men are of revenge. And in the end she had her way. That night Robert Lovyes nailed the boards across the windows, and brought the door-key back to her; and that night, twenty years ago, she crossed the threshold. No man has seen her since. But, none the less, for twenty years she has lived between the brothers, keeping them apart."

This was the story which Mr. Wyeth told me as we sat over our pipes, and the next day I set off on my journey back to London. The conclusion of the affair I witnessed myself. For a year later we received a letter from Mr. Robert, asking that a large sum of money should be forwarded to him. Being curious to learn the reason for his demand, I carried the sum to Tresco myself. Mr. John Lovyes had died a month before, and I reached the island on Mr. Robert's wedding-day. I was present at the ceremony. He was now dressed in a manner which befitted his station--an old man bent and bowed, but still handsome, and he bore upon his arm a tall woman, grey-haired and very pale, yet with the traces of great beauty. As the parson laid her hand in her husband's, I heard her whisper to him, "Dust to Dust."

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## A MARTYR TO SCIENCE.

By Mary Putnam Jacobi, M.D.

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My brief residence at Rome sufficed to destroy my illusions.

A Frenchman, a student of medicine, I had, nevertheless, remained an ardent disciple of Catholicism,--the faith in which I had been brought up by a devout mother. She was an Italian, and from her I had inherited an intense, passionate nature, and capacity for belief, which my father's nationality failed to neutralize. From him, on the other hand, I had received my education, my profession, and a certain large habit of thought, which, disdaining all lesser interests, personal or national, occupied itself exclusively with themes of universal humanity. This habit, extremely characteristic of French intellect, concurred,--perhaps as much as anything else,--in making me an ultra-montanist. As an Italian, I believed in the Church with ardor,--because I believed; as a Frenchman, I demanded a church

universal, as alone worthy of attaching my belief. The cause of the Pope was for me identified with the spiritual cause of the world, and the lukewarmness of so-called Liberal Catholics enraged me. I could understand the opposition of materialists, of atheists, or even Protestants. These all occupied a radically different base, and their eyes were turned toward a different horizon. But that a man could face Truth, and voluntarily scrimp his vision to a miserable corner of her robe,--could embrace a principle coldly, with the mere touch of a distant finger,--could pause to balance motives, and haggle over the price of devotion,--this was as incomprehensible to me as repugnant. My own sentiments were equally incomprehensible to the society by which I was surrounded, and the opposition which I constantly encountered served not a little to rivet my convictions, and fan my enthusiasm to passion.

My father died almost immediately after launching me on my medical career,--and my darling mother, two years later. In my unutterable loneliness, I lost all heart for my studies, and breaking away from école and hospitals, wandered in Italy, seeking to quench a quenchless grief. There I married an Italian girl, whose hair and eyes reminded me of my mother, but who expended on the dream of Italian unity such enthusiasm as my mother had lavished for the temporal power of the Pope. I think I was unconsciously attracted by this very difference. Valeria's opposition to the Pope was so serious and whole-souled, that it seemed to invest his cause with new dignity, and in argument with her I acquired increased respect for my own theories and for myself as capable of sustaining them. Moreover, at the very moment that our intellects were most at variance, we were each conscious of a subtle sympathy of nature; we were animated by the same feeling, though working in different directions. Her antagonism, therefore, never irritated me, but,--when the more profound union had once been established,--fascinated me by a peculiar charm, and led me, by a healthful transition, back to the ruder antagonisms of practical life. For, deprived of the support of my mother's lofty confidence, and in the weakness following excessive sorrow, I had begun to secretly despair of an ideal, which seemed buried in her all-devouring grave. At the same time I clung to it the more intensely, precisely because it seemed unattainable,--from a sort of morbid craving for whatever had become as unattainable as my mother's presence. I loathed action, even for the realization of my dreams, and over-concentrated thought threatened to degenerate into a sickly reverie that should presently exhaust the forces of my life, like an unnaturally prolonged sleep. New influence added in this direction might have driven me insane, while the diversion afforded by Valeria's counter-enthusiasm and the necessity of making an active defence of my own, roused me, and brought back the blood to the surface of my life. It was, therefore, partly an instinct of self-preservation which led me to Valeria,--and she saved me--my noble wife saved me for other destinies.

We returned to Paris, where I resumed and completed my medical studies, and I had just graduated when the war broke out in Italy.

Four happy, healthful years had completely restored my mental equilibrium. I was no longer an extravagant fanatic, prepared for a cloister or a crusade, but still a tolerably ardent ultra-montanist, pivoted upon the theory of the temporal power of the Pope. Valeria's influence, in modifying the superficial exuberance of my enthusiasm, had only rendered its energy more practical, more eager for an opportunity to incarnate its ideal in vigorous facts. Now the opportunity had arrived, and the enthusiasm blazed forth afresh; all interests, all consciousness of other ties were absorbed in devotion to the Church of which I felt myself a not unimportant member. My fortune, my time, my life, were all too little to place at its disposal, and I hastened to enrol myself on the medical staff of a regiment of Papal Zouaves. Valeria, who had always reasoned against my theories, was too consistent herself to oppose me in putting them into practice, but she insisted on accompanying me to Italy. We parted at Civita Vecchia, I to go to Rome, she, with our two children, to Naples, where her family had formerly resided. She wrote to me every day, but after several weeks came a blank of three days without a letter. At the same moment arrived the news that the cholera was raging at Naples--news which rendered most ominous this sudden interruption of the correspondence. I obtained leave of absence and hurried south, to learn that my wife and babies were dead--fallen among the very first victims of the pestilence.

Stunned and heart-sick, I returned to Rome, anxious to devote myself to the cause with the more desperate earnestness that it was the only living interest left to me in the world. I arrived just before the battle of Montana, and regretted that fortune had not assigned me a rôle among the soldiers of the cross, among those who might embrace a welcome death, in exchange for the glory of serving the Church. Resolved to approach this honor as nearly as possible, I contrived to obtain an appointment in the ambulance corps, and accompanied the troops to the field. I have no distinct recollection of that day,--the third after Valeria's funeral,--and which, as my first experience of a battle, assumed to me the magnificent proportions of an Austerlitz or Waterloo. I only know that, intoxicated by the novel excitement of the scene, perhaps by the mere smell of the gun-powder, I forgot the duties to which I was assigned, snatched a musket from a Zouave who had just expired at my feet, and rushed into the heart of the conflict. I received a slight wound in the forehead, staggered, fell, and fainted away. I suppose I must, at the same time, have received the shock from a larger ball than that which grazed my temple, and experienced some concussion of the brain, for I did not fully recover consciousness until I had been transported to the military hospital.

Here I stayed a week, and came, for the first time, into near contact

with my fellow-defenders of the faith. The contact, instead of warming, chilled me inexplicably. Instead of belief, I discovered scepticism; instead of enthusiasm, persiflage and eternal quizzing, intolerable in professed martyrs to a sacred cause.

"Que voulez-vous?" they said, shrugging their shoulders at my indignant remonstrances. "The ass who carries all his panniers on the same side stumbles on his own nose. To each man his business; those who believe, don't fight; and we who fight cannot be expected to believe."

I was surprised to find that my own loyalty became affected by this indifference, much more than by any influence to which I had hitherto been submitted. Others had sneered because they did not know; but these men precisely because they knew too well. The cause which depended so exclusively upon their bravado was belittled in their own eyes, and presently in mine also. I felt somewhat ashamed of the drops of blood I had lavished so heroically at Montana, and when the gazettes began to flourish the fame of the victory, repeat the dying speeches of fallen braves, and enrol rascally Zouaves on saintly calendars, I could have blushed in the dark--everywhere a little martyrdom, a little battle, and innumerable little apotheoses. I began to doubt the greatness of the cause made up of such infinitesimals. It is easy to serve ideas in which we have ceased to heartily believe, but it is impossible to fight for those that have become to us the least in the world ridiculous. Perhaps Valeria's death had unconsciously disheartened me for an enterprise which had been, however remotely, its occasion. Perhaps many of her words, whose force I had successfully resisted during her lifetime, now re-echoed from her grave with more profound significance. But it is certain that, for the first time, I wavered in affection for my life-long ideal. Alarmed at myself, and determined, if possible, to reinvigorate my failing faith, I went back to Rome, trusting that the Holy City would inspire me afresh. Appointed to a civil office of considerable importance, I was soon introduced into the midst of the Papal Court, and behind the scenes of the magnificent theatrical display that had so long dazzled my imagination. I was initiated into the shameful mysteries of cabal and intrigue, and taught the precious secrets of Pope and Cardinals. On every side I saw falsehood, treachery, and duplicity welcomed as the ablest servitors of truth, the grandest professions assumed as an excuse for the most vulgar villainy, ambition glozed over by degrading humility, and sensuality all the more disgusting from the saintly robes in which it was paraded and but half concealed. My faith, already enfeebled, died of rapid decline, stifled by these monstrous fooleries. Disenchanted, revolted, disgusted, I resigned my position, and abandoned the Pope and his cause forever.

I did not, therefore, enlist under Garibaldi. A tenacious loyalty to the memory of ideas I had once served would always prevent me from

more actively attacking them, or from desecrating their graves. Moreover, the revulsion of feeling consequent upon my disillusion was so tremendous, that I was swept entirely out of the region of the questions at issue, and both sides became indifferent to me, both camps dim and shadowy in the distance.

I returned, therefore, to France, and settled down in a remote corner of the provinces, to exercise my profession as a country physician. After the accumulated anguish of the last few months, the quiet dulness of the place was infinitely grateful to me. I was like a bruised swimmer, tossed upon a monotonous sandbank, who only asks to be left there in peace, until long repose has rested the aching limbs, and blunted the harrowing recollections of the shipwreck. The incessant excitement of Paris was intolerable to me, and scarcely less so the idea of revisiting its troops of sympathetic friends. They would proffer venal consolation for the loss of my wife and children; they would congratulate me maliciously on my conversion from ultra-montanism. I shrank from their curious eyes and voluble tongues, as a wounded man from the glittering apparatus of the surgeon, and like him turned over my face to the wall, to sleep.

Two years thus passed away--two years of mornings and evenings, following one another in calm succession, like a row of stolid peasant gleaners going to the fields. I became inexpressibly soothed by their calm, and by the nice tact and exquisite courtesy of Nature, with whom I had done well to take refuge. She is never astonished, she asks no impertinent questions, but welcomes her guests with even suavity, like a liberal host, throwing open to them drawing-room or garret, as may best please their fancy. The growing trees had no time to turn round to look at me; the contended hills embraced me in their arms, and let me pass without a word; the grain ripened in the mellow autumn days, unheeding the little shadow that I threw across its sunshine. This preoccupied indifference of all living things, which would initiate a mere vexation, clamorous for sympathy, is like blessed balm to the sufferer from a profound grief or mortification. Counsel is good, friendliness precious, while anything remains to be done to avert an impending calamity. But pitying words over an accomplished and irremediable misfortune, serve only to revive useless pain, and blunder, like a man who should try to force open the eyelids of a corpse. Nature, wiser than officious human tenderness, takes the sorrow coolly, as a matter of course, and in silence buries it out of sight among a million others, already thickly strewn with withered leaves. And, in presence of her imperturbable serenity during the blackest days of frost and winter, the sufferer becomes insensibly inspired with her unspoken confidence in the final return of spring. The people of the village and the farms, rooted as their own beeches, reflected back upon Nature the same immovable calm. They did not disturb themselves about me, because my rôle in society was so evident, respectable, and satisfactory, that I offered no foothold for

either curiosity or scandal. I had been sent by Providence and the Faculty of Medicine to cure their not too frequent rheumatisms and catarrhs; I acquitted myself not ill of my business,--they asked no more,--and neither offered nor expected personal interest or friendship.

As the months rolled on, I became more interested than formerly in medical reading. Absorbed entirely in my books, I even fancied that the healing apathy which sheltered my life was growing more profound. This was a mistake; the thickening of the vapors that shut out the external world, really denoted that they were about to condense and precipitate themselves into a new creation. New interests were preparing, that should presently claim from my nature all the energy, enthusiasm, and passion which had once been devoted to the old. Of this I became aware in the following manner. One day, among a package of books sent to me from Paris, arrived a pamphlet just written in defence of a new theory concerning the movements of the human heart. My curiosity was excited by the idea of a new theory on such a famous subject, and my interest was by no means abated after perusal of the pamphlet. Exposition of this theory would demand a crowd of technical details, unintelligible to the general reader, and therefore inappropriate in this place. But let such an one take the trouble to listen for a moment to the ticking of a heart, seemingly so monotonous, simple, and easy to understand, and then reflect that the slight elements discoverable in this little sound, have been forced by human intellect into at least twenty different combinations, and afforded ground for as many theories, each defended with impassioned earnestness by a different observer. He may then realize something of the interest which attaches to the explanation of this phenomenon--may even experience a sort of mental vertigo, as if he had witnessed the evolution of a world out of nothing. Owing to the paucity of the facts to be observed, the finesse requisite for the observation, and the intellectual dexterity needed to retain such minute circumstances before the mind long enough to think about them, the problem is one of the most delicate and intricate offered by physiological science. Once engaged in its discussion, the mind becomes hopelessly fascinated, and continues to pirouette about an invisible point, that is neither a thought nor a material phenomenon, but, as it were, a refined essence of both.

As in all series of vital actions, each item of the phenomenon in question is so interlinked with the rest, that an explanation of a part can never be considered final, so long as any problem remains unresolved. The latest experimentator, brooding over hitherto neglected details, may always hope to light upon some clue that shall unravel the entire entanglement in a different manner, and reform upon a new basis ideas now grouped in pretended fixity. The excitement caused by this possibility is amply sufficient to stimulate research. And there is no need to discover an immediate practical application

for the theory in order to bait the interest of vulgar minds. These would always be incapable of such difficult investigations, while really competent students were supremely indifferent to all lesser advantages attached to the discovery of truth. As for me, I had been so long removed from active life and its necessities (for my professional career had as yet been too facile and commonplace to arouse me to them), that the impractical character of the subject constituted for me an additional charm. I recognized that it belonged, for the present at least, to the region of pure thought, pure science, accessible only to intelligences refined by nature, and enriched by superior culture. In addition, therefore, to the intrinsic interest of the problem, and the solid satisfaction arising from acute intellectual activity, I could, in pursuit of this theme, experience all the subtle pleasure derived from a consciousness of personal superiority--pleasure as attainable in solitude as elsewhere since the superiority was too real and unquestionable to require the confirmatory suffrage of the crowd.

I abandoned all other studies, and threw myself impetuously into the current of these newly-received ideas. I ransacked my library, from Herophilus to Haller, from Galen to Helmholtz. England, Germany, Italy, France yielded up their tribute to my excited curiosity. And the theme, shifted, refracted from intellect to intellect, multiplied itself to bewildering complexity.

Not content with reading, I performed experiments, repeating those of my predecessors, and inventing new to control their conclusions. "With my own hands I stirred the soil, fetid and palpitating with life," and in this inmost intimacy with Nature felt myself grow strong, as Antæus by contact with the mother earth. Thus roused from my long torpor into the most intense activity,--for all activity is slack in comparison with that of thought,--I became dissatisfied with the facility of my present surroundings. I was anxious to pit myself against the world of Paris. I wanted opposition, contradiction, in order to vanquish them, and absorb their force into the glory of my triumph. Moreover, my studies had now reached a point where they required the assistance that could only be obtained in a great city: in a word, I resolved to return to the capital, for a longer or shorter time, as the sequel should prove desirable. My means rendered me independent of my \_clientèle\_, and I left my patients without regret to the care of an easily procured substitute. It is so rare to alight upon an interesting case in the country! Nothing but rheumatism and measles, measles and rheumatism, and never an autopsy,--it is as monotonous as the treatment of fever and ague. I longed for the vast metropolitan hospitals, containing specimens of every shade of disease, and affording unlimited opportunities for auscultation. Of these I stood especially in need, for the train of thought suggested by physiological experiment must be completed by pathological researches, which could only be carried on at Paris.

To Paris, therefore, I came, as to a new world, so completely had I been separated from it during the two last years. It was as if one of the spirits in the metempsychosis imagined by Fourier, had returned to the brilliant sphere from which death had driven him in temporary exile. I was at first enchanted, intoxicated. The mental activity which had seemed so intense in the sluggish province, needed to be quickened fourfold to keep abreast of the intellects with which I entered into relation, and the consciousness of the quickening affected me as with new wine. But, as I grew accustomed to my new medium, I became again subtly dissatisfied. It was not enough to be abreast of the world, I wanted to be a little ahead. In my solitude it was easy to cherish illusions concerning the value of my own work, to picture myself as a mighty and triumphant wrestler with Nature, capable, by his single strength, of forcing her reluctant secrets, to reveal them afterwards to an admiring world. But at Paris, with its enormous condensation of intellectual force, I could not flatter myself on the solitary greatness of my achievements, nor ignore the collective action of society. Whatever my attainment, I should be forced to share its fame with a hundred other workers, who had lent me, unasked, their aid. The distance between the person who uttered the last word, and him who said the next to the last, was infinitesimal, and this close proximity annoyed me. I longed for some brilliant occasion to surpass all my contemporaries in one great bound; an opportunity to bestow on science and humanity some unique benefit that could never be compared with those accumulated by lesser men. One day, revolving many things in my mind, I entered the Bibliothèque Impériale. Strolling idly past the grated bookcases, my attention was attracted by the title of a thin folio, wedged in between Lavater and Geoffroy St. Hilaire. An inexplicable impulse led me to demand this book, the "History of Vesalius and his Times." I had no particular reason, that I knew of, to be interested in Vesalius; I merely followed an idle whim, suggested rather by the peculiar shape and position of the folio, than by any solid reason; and this whim did not hurry me out of my lounging mood. I settled myself in one of the windows, and leisurely turned over the leaves of my book, reading a line here and a phrase there, until I alighted and settled upon the following passage: "So the rumor spread abroad that Vesalius had opened the chest of a living man to see his heart beat. And upon that the people were in a fury and the court hissed with rage, and Vesalius was obliged to flee from Spain before the power of the Inquisition; and some say that he then made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. But on his return he was shipwrecked on a desolate island and perished miserably. Hubert, in his *Vindiciæ contra tyrannus* reports this history to the eternal shame of the Jesuits."

The world often describes with minuteness the material framework of such noisy events as have impressed its coarse sensibilities. But it commonly neglects, because ignoring, the scenes wherein have taken

place the crises of thought, or occurred the birth of new, indomitable ideas. To the thinker, however, such outer scenes remain inextricably associated with the thought that has sprung to life in their midst. To this day I preserve a vivid recollection of every item of the place where I read the story of Vesalius; the lofty reading-room, with its confused lining of many-colored books, the tables crowded by eager students, the broad, deep windows through which the sun streamed, and from which I, sitting with open folio on my lap, watched the shifting fountain and the swaying trees and the long, untrimmed grass in the courtyard below. For the story seemed to have laid hold of my inmost soul, and touched the spring of a long-hidden desire. Why I was so moved, I could not tell. What issue would open to this whirlpool of vague excitement in which I had fallen, I had no idea. But I was profoundly conscious both of the excitement and the emotion, and, with that refined epicureanism of which intellectual people alone are capable, I abandoned myself, for a time, to the subtle luxury of their enjoyment.

My reverie was interrupted by the clanging of the great clock and the scarcely less harsh voice of the gardien as he announced the hour for closing the library. Still wrapped in fantastic meditation, I descended the stairs to the street, and followed the rue Richelieu to the boulevard, there to mingle with the human stream that endlessly encircled the city like a new army of Gideon. Drifting in the current, I reached the Bastille, crossed the Pont d'Austerlitz, gained the Boulevard de l'Hôpital and continued walking to the Invalides, to the Avenues Jena and Wagram, and from the Place des Ternes, all along the exterior rampart. And as I walked, my entangled thoughts gradually disengaged themselves into clearness and precision.

The biographer of Vesalius, who evidently shared the prejudices of the people, had exerted himself strenuously to disprove the calumny attached to the name of the great anatomist. He, like the rest, was blinded by that vulgar egotism which clamorously prefers the interests of individuals to those of society,--egotism no less short-sighted than vulgar, for the large and abstract interests cared for by science are precisely those which shall ultimately affect the greatest number of individuals; and no less inconsequent than short-sighted, since no one hesitates to ruin entire hosts of individuals upon the faintest chance of promoting the material interests of society. A stock company may immolate hundreds during the construction of a Panama railroad--a sovereign sacrifice thousands in the contest for a Crimean peninsula; the hue and cry only begins when the savant modestly begs permission to utilize a single life for the advancement of science. He is execrated as a monster, and burned alive in expiation of his crime. Absurd inconsistency, trivial superstition! from which it is time that at least the scientific world were emancipated. Long enough has the ignorant rabble exercised brute tyranny over intellects towering above its comprehension. The time

for concession is past, the moment has arrived for the savant to assume the sway that rightfully devolves upon him and declare the confiscation of all claims to the supreme interest of the search after truth.

For my part, therefore, so far from blaming Vesalius because he had dissected a living man, I should have accorded him most profound reverence for this proof of elevation above ordinary prejudice. And the more I thought over the matter, the more I became convinced that the accusation was well founded, that the deed had really been performed, which moral cowardice alone induced the glorious criminal to disavow.

My brooding fancy, satiated with the image of the great anatomist, began to occupy itself with his so-called victim. Who was he? what motive had induced him to surrender his body to the scalpel of the master, his life to the realization of the master's idea? A slave, a debtor, from whom the ingenious savant had thus exacted a pound of flesh? A trembling poltroon, forced to the sacrifice more reluctantly than Isaac to the altar? I preferred rather to believe that it was a favorite pupil, burning with enthusiasm for the master, joyful to participate in his mighty labors at the cheap expense of his own lesser life. Had Vesalius been a general, and he an aide-de-camp before a rampart, all the world would have applauded him, rushing upon death at the word of command. I myself had known, by a brief experience, the thrilling impulse to fight, to die, in behalf of a cause. Rivers of blood had been shed for honor, for loyalty, for patriotism. Was the desire for truth less ardent than these worn-out passions! Could it not rather supply their place in the new world about to be created by science? What could produce a greater impression upon the entire world, and more forcibly announce the inauguration of a new era, than the voice of a man who should declare, "I refuse to draw my sword for the hideous folly of war; to surrender my life at the absurd caprice of princes; but I offer myself cheerfully, unreservedly, as the instrument of Science, in her majestic schemes for the discovery of truth!"

My recent studies on the problem of the heart's movements brought me into peculiar sympathy with the object of Vesalius' researches. The tantalizing results as often obtained by experiments on lower animals, the uncertainty of the inferences that could be deduced from them to form a theory of the human organism, had often excited in me a lively desire for a direct experiment upon man. This desire had hitherto been smothered beneath the mass of conventional ideas, which so frequently overwhelm our timidity and enslave our feebleness in endless routine. But the daring word of genius had now struck the chains from my intellect, and emancipated me from the slavery of that hesitation. I--I would follow in the path already traced by that bolder mind; I would redeem that calumniated memory from disgrace, and enrich its

glory by the surpassing realization of the original conception. I would inaugurate the new era; I would set the example of supreme heroism in science; and all the world, and all future ages, should preserve my name with reverent homage, and enwreath it with laurels of undying fame. For, that the purity of my motives might be above suspicion, I would perform the experiment, not as Vesalius in the capacity of anatomist, but as the victim, voluntarily devoting himself to the transcendent interests of an ideal cause.

And as my mind leaped up into this grand thought, I felt cheek and brow flush with violent emotion. Carried along by the first impetus of the idea, I walked as rapidly as in a dream, unseeing, unhearing every thing that surrounded me. Before I knew whither I had come, I felt a cool wind blow over me, as if after a feverish journey on a heated road, I had suddenly stepped into a cool, dark cavern. And, looking out from the brilliant visions in which I was plunged, I found myself already entered within the gates of Père la Chaise--the city of the dead, of the vast majority to which I was to go over in fulfilment of my great idea. I wandered among the graves, and read the epitaphs, the reiterated dreary expressions of disappointment and despair, that the deceased had been passively torn from a world to which every fibre of their hearts was clinging. Not so would read my epitaph, and I began to compose it, less as a witty amusement than as a device for resisting an insidious chill that had begun to creep over me like a damp exhalation from the graves. For my imagination suddenly pictured to itself the heavy tombstone pressing down, down forever, on the cruel coffin-lid beneath which I should be lying. I shuddered at the picture, I shuddered at death, and, leaning on an iron rail which girt in a tomb, hid my face in my arms to shut out the signs of decay and the more ghastly emblems of immortality with which the populous cimetière was crowded.

Raising my head after a brief struggle, I perceived that I was standing in front of the famous tomb of Abelard and Heloise. The sculptured forms of the unhappy lovers reposed side by side on the lid of the stone mausoleum, as they had lain for six centuries, and immortalized the mingling of their mortal dust below. Tears sprang to my eyes as I looked at their still, peaceful faces, for I remembered my dead wife, and then, my lost children. Death, that contained them in its hollow caverns, could not be frightful to me. It was rather the treasure-house of all I possessed most precious, and which I should now hasten to reclaim. All the loneliness and longing which had been dulled by habit, and lately covered over by mental activity, awoke, and cried out passionately within me, repelling the slight pleasures of this world, as a child crying for its mother dashes aside an offered toy. What was left to me in life that I should cling to it? What ties bound me to this perfidious, slippery earth? To whom owed I any duties? Whose pillow would moisten with tears because I had passed out of sight? Destitute of personal interests, I could only devote

myself to those of humanity, and that by some method that should concentrate in a single moment both the achievement and its reward. For small were the enjoyment to survive for fame, with whose report I could return laden to no fireside, for whose sake I could watch no eyes brighten in sweet pride of sympathy. I should sicken of it in half an hour, and my hard-earned laurels would become as dusty and lifeless as those ghastly wreaths of immortelles hanging around Heloise's tomb. So desolated love joined itself to restless ambition and ideal enthusiasm, to concentrate my life for the purpose from which, since then, it has never swerved.

Thus resolved upon self-devotion, I set about the task of finding a colleague to share the risks and glory of my enterprise. I did not conceal from myself that upon him would devolve a rôle far more difficult and complicated than my own. From me, the subject of the proposed experiment, was only required sublime heroism for the sacrifice. But the man who should perform the operation must possess moral courage to face public criticism, perhaps opprobrium; a trained intellect, already habituated to discussion of the problem in question, and impassioned for its solution; great practical skill and finesse, able to appreciate and profit by every detail of the phenomena that would unroll themselves before his observation; iron nerve, that should remain unmoved by any startling peculiarities of the case in hand.

The necessity for uniting so many characteristics, compelled me to abandon my first hope of forming a committee for the experiment; for as soon as I began to sound physiologists on the subject, I landed knee-deep in a mass of invincible prejudices and prepossessions. The scheme was too new, too daring for the capacity of the mediocrities which constitute the bulk of even the scientific world. I must discover some exceptional solitary enthusiast like myself, able to appreciate and embrace with joy the grand opportunity I offered him. To the search for this enthusiast, therefore, I bent all my energies, and knocked at many doors, wherever, through the windows, I believed to have detected on the hearth the upleaping of an inner flame.

It was astonishing how often I knocked in vain! How often my insinuations, my suggestions, my direct propositions were repulsed! I appealed to a professor who had concentrated the best years of his life to the problem I proposed to solve,--he pooh-poohed my scheme. In vain I tried to explain my methods for overcoming its practical difficulties; he decried them all, I am convinced, from pure jealousy.

"And you ought to know by this time," he added with a scarcely disguised sneer, "that a single experiment on a human subject would be of little value until its results were controlled by a dozen others. And I doubt that your enthusiasm would prove sufficiently contagious to furnish the supply for the dissecting table." And he obstinately

shut his ears to any further argument.

I disclosed my plan to a struggling physician, ready for any adventure that should thrust him into notoriety, bring his name before the public, and thus open the way to a prosperous *\_clientèle\_*. Yet he recoiled from a project fraught with promise so sure and magnificent as mine. A hospital *\_interne\_*, flushed with enthusiasm for his first practical studies, started with horror when I divulged my ideas. Many, true Parisian *\_raillleurs\_*, regarded my proposition as an excellent joke.

"Allons donc, c'est une vieille blague que tu nous fais là."

And all my protestations served only to increase their amusement, and their determination not to be taken in.

A few eyed me suspiciously, as if they imagined I were insane, and one old bourgeois doctor had the impertinence to administer to me a moral lecture.

"Young man," he said, "you are possessed by the same preposterous vanity which induced Empedocles to throw himself into Vesuvius, and Erostratus to fire the temple of Diana. I recommend a course of dry cupping to the nape of the neck, to relieve your congested and over-excited brain, and, in the mean time, a decent seclusion from society, that you insult with your absurdities."

I flushed red with anger, but this last rebuff warned me that I must change my tactics. Like all reformers, I found the world too stiff and rigid for my purposes, and only harmed myself with kicking against the bristling pricks. I must turn to a new generation, to early youth, and find some mind still unformed and flexible, that I could myself submit to a far-sighted training, and cast into the mould of my own ideas. The opportunities of which my contemporaries were unworthy, I would reserve as a gracious boon for a well-initiated pupil.

Two years had elapsed since my arrival at Paris, and the untiring energy with which I pursued physiological researches had begun to bring my name into notice. When, therefore, I proposed to open a course of lectures upon experimental physiology, my friends all encouraged me with flattering assurances.

"A la bonne heure," exclaimed the student to whom had I once addressed my secret plans, "something sensible at last. I trust such rational occupation will purge your head of its maggots, and satisfy your aspirations for fame--"

I smiled stealthily to myself. It is thus that the light world always measures the austerity of our resolutions by its own lightness!

I obtained the requisite official permission, and opened the course at the École Pratique under the best auspices. The lectures were thronged from the beginning, and the interest by no means abated as the weeks rolled on. Enthusiastic myself, I possessed in no small degree the gift of communicating (on all ordinary subjects) my enthusiasm to others. I aimed less at imparting solid instruction to my pupils than at impressing their imagination by a series of skilfully arranged effects. My experiments, therefore, were governed by dramatic unity, rarely sought in the confused and arid expositions of official professors. Now I led my auditors into the inmost laboratories of Nature, and revealed, in plant and animal, the fine affinities that regulated her processes of nutrition. Now I traced some delicate nervous filament from the spinal column of the amphioxus to the cerebral hemisphere of the mammifer. Now I disclosed the ramifying canals in the vast system of circulation, mounting from the spongy network of the mollusk and the sluggish lymphatic of the reptile to the brilliant, bounding arteries of the double-hearted vertebrates. And always, beyond the last disclosure, after the most complete revelation, I hinted at something yet to come, some higher, unveiled mystery, to which all this grand series was but the prelude. As a priest who volubly initiates the neophytes into the service of the temple, but points in silence to the inner court containing the Deity for whom the service is performed, so I, after the most magnificent display of animal life, silently indicated a concealed hereafter, a culmination in the human body, hitherto withheld from our curious gaze. I thus strove to suggest an ideal, left for a time incomplete; to foster an impetuous impatience, that, stimulated by the great acquisitions of the past, should reach forward irresistibly for the greater prize of the future. I trusted that among all my auditors would be found one that should divine the cipher, and quicken over its subtle secret--one intellect, that, carried unconsciously along the current of my thought, should finally arrive at my unrevealed goal.

Among the most constant attendants on the lectures, I had long noticed one young man of about twenty-two years old, who always occupied the same seat close to my operating-table. He was thin, shabbily dressed, with full, intense forehead, ravenous face, and brilliant eyes. His poverty was indicated not only by his toilette, and that special form of unfed expression peculiar to the studious hungry, but also by his absence from all the private classes, and redoubled assiduity at the public lectures. His intelligence was evident from the absorbed attention with which he followed the experiments, and from his manner of taking notes,--not at random, like most of the students, but at well-chosen points perceptible only to a person already in possession of a commanding view of the whole subject. By a little stratagem, I contrived one day to get hold of his note-book, and was surprised at the accurate observations, the acute suggestions, and range of information indicated by the marginal queries. Those who have ever

experienced the delight of discovering an intellect--discovery more precious than that of a gold mine--can appreciate the eagerness with which I devoured these pages, finding everywhere the stamp of the mind I sought. And my satisfaction was redoubled by reflecting how greatly the youth and poverty of the writer might increase my facilities for obtaining complete possession of him. I was not long in devising a scheme for forcing the intimacy of the young man, who, like most poor students, was evidently as shy and proud as he was poor.

One day, at the close of the lecture, I touched my student on the arm.

"Be kind enough to wait a moment," I said, "I have something to say to you."

The boy flushed and drew back a little with all the haughtiness of a sensitive person ill at ease with the world, and expecting from it nothing but rebuffs and insolence. I fancied that an anxious suspicion crossed his mind that I was about to lay claim to some payment for lessons, of which he had hitherto ignored the necessity. I waited till the greater part of the crowd had squeezed through the narrow door of the amphitheatre, dismissed the loiterers, and then turned to my companion with a frank air of relief, as to an equal with whom I could refresh myself after the fatigue of teaching lesser minds. I saw that I had already won his heart, before I began to speak.

"I find that I require another assistant," I said. "The man that I have at present, is, as you know, a mere machine. I need some one interested, enthusiastic, capable of seconding me intelligently. I want, in short, a pupil. Will you fill the place?"

Surprised, overwhelmed with an honor which he could so keenly appreciate, the young man flushed again, hesitated, stammered, and finally only succeeded in answering me with his beautiful eyes, for his tongue refused to speak. I already loved the boy; alas! how he has repaid my love!

"It will be a mutual exchange of service," I continued. "You will be of great use to me in my preparations, and, in return, I may be able to initiate you into the mysteries of our art, somewhat more thoroughly than can be done in a public lecture."

"I thank you, sir," said Guy. He tried to speak coldly, but he looked as if he longed to throw himself at my feet and cover my hand with kisses. To relieve his emotion, in which I secretly exulted, I patted him friendlily on the shoulder, and began immediately to discuss the programme for the following lecture.

I had every reason to congratulate myself on my new assistant. His zeal and ingenuity not only seconded my researches, but often

supplemented them when over-fatigue persuaded me to repose. And Guy's personal character proved as winning as his intellect keen and reliable. Before long I contrived that he should come and live with me, and I invented for him some light literary employment, by which he could pay me for his board and lodging, with an insignificant sacrifice of his time. He acceded to this arrangement upon its apparent terms, but none the less did he pierce its transparent motive, and tacitly devote to me his whole soul in acknowledgment of what he considered my delicate generosity. These unfledged souls are apt to throw themselves thus away in exchange for the most trifling pecuniary service, and torment themselves, moreover, that the compensation is so mean. I smiled at Guy's naïveté, but none the less turned it to account. From the foothold thus gained, I rapidly extended my influence over his entire nature. My larger experience enabled me to complete his unfinished thoughts, to sympathize with his scarcely conscious feelings, to subtly impress his principles and co-ordinate them to my own scheme. Having begun by forestalling his material necessities, I continued to supply the finer wants of heart and intellect so completely, that he became habituated to turn to me for everything, and to receive everything that came from me with implicit faith. I fed him, taught him, loved him, and all with such artfulness, that he felt my presence in his life only as a plant feels the sunshine in its calyx, conscious of no intrusion to be resented, or tyranny to be repelled. It is so easy to make the conquest of a young, ingenuous nature! so easy to fix its impetuous, unsuspecting enthusiasm! I marvel that these exquisite relations between master and pupil are so generally left uncultivated, or their charm wasted. I almost marvel that I did not rest completely satisfied with my life at that time; with its arduous study, and its growing fame, and Guy, with the delicious task of educating his supple intellect to my ideas, and penetrating his nature with my personality. Only the loftiness of my ideal saved it from making womanish shipwreck on this episode in its austere voyage towards the realization.

As Guy became more and more competent, I delegated more and more into his hands the preparation for the lectures. The first excitement of getting them into train was past, the first keen interest dulled by habit; and when the second winter began, with repetition of all that had gone before, I went through the business almost mechanically. Often I left everything to my assistant, and shut myself up alone to dream over the project that secretly absorbed my soul. Guy fancied I was ill, and, as my exertions slackened, redoubled his own, consuming heart and brain in the resolve to maintain the course at the level of its original popularity. I was inwardly amused at his devotion to such secondary considerations, but did not interfere, for it helped to serve my purpose.

Finally, I believed my pupil to be fully prepared, and decided that the moment had come for the complete revelation of myself.

One evening,--I selected the evening advisedly, since at that time the imagination is more susceptible of impressions, and further removed from the vulgar influences of every-day life,--I entered our study. Guy was seated at a table, and working in his usual intense fashion, and I threw myself on a sofa beside him.

"Guy," I exclaimed, "it tires me to look at you. For eight hours you have not stirred from those books. You will kill yourself."

"Great loss," he answered, "so that it were in your service, and during the pursuit of knowledge."

"You love me then, Guy?"

"Love you!" He rose from the table, and coming to the sofa, kneeled and kissed my forehead, without shame, as in France men \_can\_ kiss each other.

"My master, my friend!" he said; and I felt that he was mine, bound to me by a love passing the love of women. I drew him before me, and ran my fingers through his clustering hair. His affection was pleasant to me, independent of the use I meant to make of it; and I almost experienced a feminine desire to trifle with it for a moment, as one shifts a diamond from one hand to the other to watch its changing flame.

"How much do you love me? as the children say. What would you do for me?"

"I would die for you!" he answered vehemently.

That is the first thing youth ever thinks of. From very fulness of life, it can afford to be on familiar terms with death.

"Tut; that is unnecessary. But would you do anything I asked of you as a personal favor?"

"Only try me. I would go to the ends of the earth for you."

"\_Tenez!\_ suppose I was dying King Arthur and you my squire. Would you hesitate to fling away Excalibur at my command?"

"The paltry bauble! What thought could I have to waste upon it while you were dying?"

"But suppose this obedience did not suffice to release me. Suppose that, in my agony, I prayed you to drive your own sword into my heart to set me free. Would you do it?"

He hesitated a moment. "That would be a terrible prayer; yet if you were suffering, and I knew that you must die, I would do even that for you."

"You have said it," I cried, and leaped to my feet in uncontrollable excitement. "I have a request to make you, I have a prayer that you only can fulfil. Swear that you will grant it--swear by all your love for me, by all the gratitude which you profess, and for which I shall never claim other return--swear that you will do what I am about to bid you!"

I saw that Guy was disquieted by my words and manner. Instead of replying with the bold confidence I had a right to expect, he recoiled from the revelation that pressed urgently on my lips.

"Take care," he said, "your eyes are glittering as if you had a fever. Let us stop talking about this till to-morrow."

The upstart boy, thus to dare to patronize me with his foresight and protection--\_me\_, who had taught him all he knew, and who was about to offer him a place on my giddy pinnacle of immortal fame! I was intensely angry, but succeeded in controlling myself, for I felt that an untimely explosion of violence might ruin all. I passed my hand over my eyes, as if to blur the glitter that had alarmed Guy's scrupulous feebleness, and sat down quietly again.

"The fact is, my dear Guy," I said, "I have been waiting so long for an opportunity to execute a certain scheme of mine, that I cannot help being a little excited when this opportunity seems at last within my reach."

"What kind of a scheme?" asked Guy.

"A scheme for the advancement of the science in which we are both so interested."

"Oh," said Guy, with an air of relief, "you know how you can rely upon me for any undertaking in that direction."

"I should think so, especially when it concerns the problem upon which we have both been so long engaged--the movements of the heart."

"What!" he exclaimed with delight. "You have discovered something new for that! Shall I ever cease to admire your masterly ingenuity. What is to be done? You want to send me to Africa to capture a live rhinoceros? I will set out to-morrow."

"What would be the use! All the information that can be gained by

experiment on the higher mammals is already ours. Since the problem derives the greatest part of its interest from its application to man, it is on man that the new experiment should be performed."

"Ah, yes," sighed Guy; "we are always tripping up against this impossibility."

"Nothing is impossible," I answered. "I am resolved that the experiment shall be performed on man."

Guy started, then laughed. "Oh! you are joking," he said.

"Not the least in the world. I have even selected the subject."

"Eh! well, since you are so determined, you may dissect me when you choose. Only I warn you of difficulties with the tribunals afterwards."

"I leave you to settle with them. It is not you, but myself, who is to be the subject; and you must perform the experiment."

I was surprised at the calmness with which I made this momentous revelation of my purpose. But we are always on the level of the circumstances to which we have attained, and they do not seem as awful as when viewed from the distance.

Guy did not at all believe that I was in earnest, and half an hour's impetuous talking was needed to convince him of the reality and fixedness of my resolve. Then he tried to reason with me.

"Your experiment will be utterly useless," he said; "because death will ensue almost immediately after the chest is opened. And during the few seconds that might intervene for observation, the heart would beat too rapidly to render observation possible."

"I have devised means for palliating all these difficulties," I answered eagerly. "In the first place, the last act of the experiment must be preceded by the administration of woorara, to slacken the rapidity of the heart's action. In the second place, I do not propose to open the chest with the bistoury. The operation, even though aided by chloroform, would cause too violent a shock to the nervous system. But I intend to burn through gradually, by successive applications of caustic, as in the procedure for opening hepatic cysts. Deep-seated adhesions would form and shut out the lungs securely, and thus probably obviate the necessity for artificial respiration. The pericardium would be reached with comparatively little disturbance, and once exposed, the operator would be able to make a first and important series of observations, before proceeding farther. Finally, he would rend the pericardium, and arrive directly at the heart

itself."

"And kill you!" cried Guy.

"I should die," I answered composedly, "as men have died after inoculating themselves with the plague; only my death would be more glorious, because incurred for pure science, and in face of a certainty. It is precisely on this account that the act will insure to our names the honor and reverence of all future generations."

"Nonsense. You will be pitied as a suicide and madman, and I shall be hung at the next assizes."

"Coward! traitor!" I burst forth in ungovernable passion. "\_This\_ is the extent of your devotion, then! \_These\_ your narrow calculations and sordid reckonings! You, the one soul in whom I trusted, the one friend I had in the world capable of appreciating me! Oh, shame on such ingratitude! Oh, miserable me, doomed to such disappointment!"

He was deeply hurt. I saw that I had made some impression upon the hard skepticism with which the world had incased a naturally generous nature, and pressed my advantage. I poured out a torrent of eloquence, reasoning, prayers, entreaty. I wrestled with him as for the salvation of a soul; the night waned on our hot conversation, and finally, toward three o'clock, when the gray dawn began to point weirdly in the East, I gained the victory. Guy promised to fulfil my wish, at whatever risks to himself, and with the certainty of sacrificing my life in the experiment. On the spot, I drew up a paper testifying that the operation should have been performed at my express command, and stated the reasons in full. To this document, I trusted to obtain in the country the signature of two witnesses sufficiently incurious to sign without reading.

For it was decided that, for the sake of greater secrecy and convenience, we should withdraw to the country, and I selected a locality about four hours' distance from Paris, where we were both unknown. These details settled, we separated for sleep.

But I think neither of us closed our eyes that night; and Guy was so pale and haggard the next morning that I hardly knew him. During the week that we remained at Paris, making preparations for our departure, he hardly ate, or slept, or spoke, but seemed to waste and droop like a man in the clutch of a fiend. I became anxious. I was afraid he would fall ill, and thus be incapacitated for the performance of his duty.

However, we managed to leave the city without accident, and installed ourselves in the lonely dwelling I had rented. We hired an old woman from the village to take charge of our housekeeping, and then devoted

ourselves to our work. We engaged in a preliminary series of experiments, through which, as through a suite of lesser apartments leading to the throne-room, we were to approach the act that should crown them all.

For the first time since he had been my pupil, I found Guy nervous, \_maladroit\_. He turned pale at the sight of blood. The struggling of a pigeon, or the yelp of a dog, seemed to make him sick, and a hundred times he laid down his scalpel as if unable to proceed. He was like a neophyte, and a prey to the sentimental horrors of which, up to this time, his absorbed intellect had been quite unconscious. I trembled. If his nerve should fail him when it became \_my\_ turn, and the whole costly experiment be thrown away through some awkwardness on his part! I was furious at the very idea, and told him so.

"I will haunt you forever if you fail," I said, savagely.

"You will in any case," answered Guy, sighing heavily.

But at my instances, he tried to rouse himself from this inexplicable languor, and to drill hand and eye to exquisite precision. I watched him severely. I refused to pardon the least blunder. I trained him for this last trial, as men train horses for the winning race. Guy was really an able physiologist, and his skill only needed finishing touches to be as effective as was possible in the actual condition of science. After two or three weeks I was satisfied, and bade him prepare the next day to begin the last experiment.

I shall never forget that day, the supreme moment of my life. I sat at the windows of an inner room, waiting for Guy, and looked out over the valley that basked in the afternoon sunshine. It was the beginning of September--one of those perfect days at the prime of the year, when life has reached its culmination, and pauses in the fulness of its own content. The air, ripe and balmy, purged of the rawness of Spring and the violent heat of Summer, was as yet untouched by the faintest frost, and restored to such perfection as mortals might breathe after the regeneration of the earth. The grain had been gathered in, but the unfallen fruit still weighed down the orchards, and absorbed the sunlight for its mellowing juices. The first press of the harvest season was over, the second had not yet begun; for one precious moment man and nature paused together, and surveyed the long ascent by which the year had climbed to these high table-lands of peace--not innocent peace, ignorant of action, but the peace of victory after conflict, of repose after strife, of maturity entering upon its rewards. In the perfection of these sunful days, all possibility of change seemed to have been outgrown, left far behind in an old, wearisome existence of long ago. The world had entered upon an eternal blessedness, and the jasper walls of heaven shut it out from harm forever, like coral reefs encircling a lagoon in the Pacific seas. Only by remembering the years

that had been before, and the years that should follow after, could the reluctant mind convince itself that this seeming eternity was frail; that whoso lingered too long among the splendors of September would be surely overtaken by treacherous frost, and biting winter winds; that there was but one way to escape the revolting decline from this pinnacle of life--to die. That was my secret. I alone, of all who shivered at approaching winter, had learned how to escape. For me, not only the year, but life itself, should cease at its pinnacle, refusing to go down to a lower place, as a dethroned being prefers death to miserable exile. And with these thoughts, I felt myself possessed by an unutterable calm, such as comes to fever patients when they are dying.

The first day of the experiment little was to be done. I called Guy, who lingered in the laboratory, and bade him apply the first layer of caustic to my breast, over the heart. The little operation required small skill, and this was fortunate, for Guy's hand trembled so violently, that a delicate manipulation would have been ruined. A drop of the paste fell on my coat-sleeve, and in a few minutes had burned a hole entirely through.

"Look, Guy," I exclaimed, "through such a window shall you soon gaze at the central mystery of life. I almost envy you the opportunity."

"Oh!" he cried, "if you would but take it! If you would but use me for your experiment, and spare me this dreadful trial!"

He had urged this exchange from the beginning, but of course I would not consent. What! give up my great chance for immortality, surrender my unique place in the history of science and the world? No, indeed; I was already generous in sharing my achievement, in trusting the preservation of my fame to even my most loyal friend. Beyond that it were folly, madness, to go.

"Nonsense," I replied therefore to this senseless entreaty. "That question has already been sufficiently discussed. Bah! that caustic burns."

It was necessary to wait three or four days before renewing the caustic to deepen the eschar made by the first application. This delay gradually became intolerable to me,--the more, that Guy prolonged it on a multitude of trivial pretexts. I was finally obliged to resume the direction of affairs, and order him to proceed.

He began to prepare some Vienna paste, but in a slow, dawdling manner that irritated my nerves to the last degree. I snatched the cup from his hand and stirred the caustic myself.

"How many centuries have admired Socrates," I remarked, "for his

theatrical pretence of drinking the hemlock voluntarily. In future ages men will remember with greater admiration how I, with my own hand, prepared the instrument of my death. Do not forget to mention this circumstance in your notes, and add that my hand did not tremble."

I gave the caustic to Guy; but at the same moment the door opened behind us, and he sprang forward with a sudden cry, dashing the cup in pieces on the floor. I turned in angry surprise at the interruption, and saw two men standing in the room. They were perfect strangers to me, but came forward immediately and saluted me with the friendly courtesy of old acquaintance. I even fancied that I detected an intolerable softness in their manner, such as physicians sometimes assume in speaking to sick people. One of the intruders took my passive hand in his, and shook it with unnecessary cordiality, contriving, I think, at the same time to slip his fingers on my wrist, just over the pulse.

My instinct was decidedly in favor of kicking these impertinent fellows down stairs. But so strong is the influence of civilized habit, that I restrained myself to a freezing politeness, inquiring to what I might be indebted for the honor, etc.

"These gentlemen are friends of mine," interposed Guy, who had stooped on the floor to pick up the broken fragments of the cup, and who did not look at me as he spoke. "They are amateurs in our science, and would be much interested in examining the laboratory that we have installed here. But since they have taken a long journey, and must be hungry, I think we had better first order the déjeuner."

"The devil!" I muttered inwardly. But at the same moment I reflected that these visitors with their congenial tastes might serve opportunity as witnesses to the experiment--even be useful in correcting any possible awkwardness in Guy's manipulation. I therefore addressed them in a tone of cordial hospitality.

"We are at this moment engaged in some researches," I said, "that cannot fail to interest you, and where, perhaps, you may be of signal service, if you will consent to stay with us awhile and put up with our modest accommodations."

"You honor our poor abilities," returned the first stranger, with a bland smile. "We shall be most happy to accept your amiable invitation."

So we four sat down to the déjeuner, in the most cheerful possible humor. The black stain that burned on my breast stimulated me to a secret exultation; I felt a secret pride in anticipating the wonder of these men, when they should hereafter recall the gayety of my demeanor

on this occasion. They, on the other hand, seconded me bravely in the conversation. Not for years had I met with companions so brilliant, witty, and sympathetic. They listened to me with the closest attention, and seemed to find a peculiar charm in the freaks of my fancy, to which, for the moment, I gave the rein.

"These men are capable of appreciating me," I said to myself, and congratulated my good fortune which had sent them thither.

Then I rose. "Gentlemen," I said, "I cannot express to you the pleasure that I have derived from your society. Before we adjourn to the laboratory, allow me, in English fashion, to propose a toast."

"Wait a moment," said Guy, breaking the sullen silence he had hitherto maintained. "I ordered some Burgundy from Paris the other day, and it arrived this morning."

He left the room, and presently returned with an uncorked bottle in his hand, which he set before me. I fancied, as he did so, that he looked rather significantly at the two strangers, but politeness forbade me to express my suspicion. I poured out the wine, and pushed the glasses to my companions.

"Drink," I cried, "to the experiment that shall open a new era in science, and to the man that shall inaugurate a new revolution in the world." And I drained my glass.

Whether or no the others followed my example, I cannot tell; for almost immediately I felt a subtle fire course through my veins, followed by a delicious languor that crept inwards to my heart, and seemed to arrest its pulsation by an irresistible persuasiveness to repose. Probably I swooned, for I lost all consciousness, and all recollection of time or place for many hours.

\* \* \* \*

When I came to myself, I was a prisoner in this cursed asylum at Charenton.

--Guy had betrayed me,--the false friend,--the poltroon,--and I, who trusted him too much, had fallen a victim to his stratagems. Whether he had been true to me at the beginning, and then had faltered at the last, or whether he had deceived me all along with affected complaisance, I never knew. For when he came to see me one day, my just resentment excited me to such a paroxysm of fury that the people here recommended him not to return, and I have never seen him since. So here I sit, in forced idleness, waiting for the arrival of some one who shall appreciate my great idea, and release me for its accomplishment. The people by whom I am surrounded are kind enough,

but ignorant; they admire me, but are unable to understand me. So they bind me in silken chains, and clasp them with honeyed words, and I remain a prisoner. It is thus that the world rewards its greatest benefactors!

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